CHRONICLES OF CULTURE

LETTERS & ARTS

MORALS & MANNERS

William Hawkins

Russell Kirk

Charles Moser

Stephen Tanner

The Literature of Order

VOLUME 9 • NUMBER 2 • FEBRUARY 1985

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CHRONICLES OF
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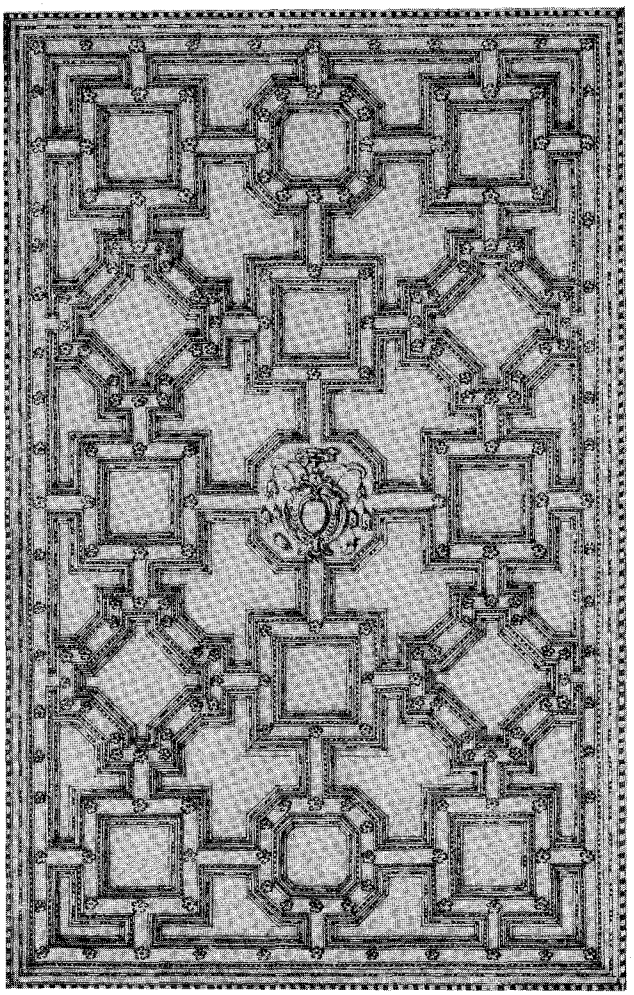
Vol. 9, No. 2 February 1985

The Literature of Order



Chronicles of Culture (ISSN 0163-1187) is published monthly by The Rockford Institute; President: John Howard. Editorial and business offices: 934 N. Main Street, Rockford, Illinois 61103. Editorial phone: (815) 964-5054. Circulation phone: (815) 964-5811. Editor: Leopold Tyrmand; Managing Editor: Thomas Fleming; Assistant Editor: Bryce Christensen; Copy Editor: Cynthia Calvert; Contributing Editor: Gary S. Vasilash; Editorial Secretary: LeAnn Manning; Publisher: Richard A. Vaughan; Production Manager: Barbara De Witz; Composition Manager: Anita Fedora; Subscription Manager: Theresa Domanski; Technical Services: Marge Wollschlager Composition. Subscriptions: $18.00 one year.

Cover: original vignette by Warren Chappell. Page 3: "Decorazione Per Soffitto" by Ignoto Secolo XVI, from the MacLeish Collection, The Rare Print Cabinet, Rockford College Library. Original illustrations throughout the text by Zbigniew and Emilia Fitz. Copyright © 1985 by The Rockford Institute. All rights reserved. □

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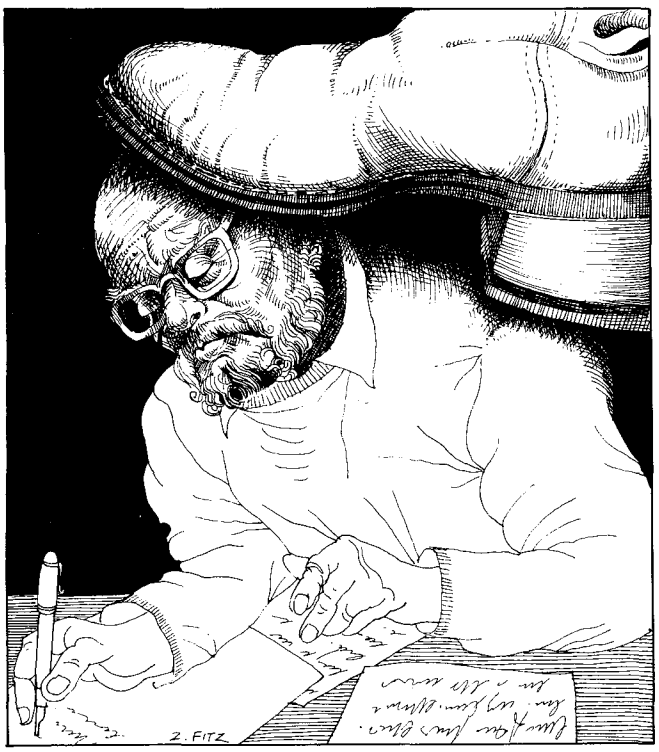
Censorship: When to Say No

Every April since 1981 the American Society of Journalists and Authors sponsors an "I Read Banned Books" campaign. They routinely trot out copies of children's books like *Alice in Wonderland* or *Mary Poppins* and modern classics like *Ulysses*—all of which have been censored by somebody somewhere. One of them inevitably quotes Jefferson on tolerating "error of opinion," and some professional librarian is sure to warn us that if the prudes have their way, they will soon be removing copies of Shakespeare and the Bible from the library shelves. This year the New York City Library has chimed in by commemorating 1984 with an exhibition, *Censorship: 500 Years of Conflict.* The exhibition catalogue is a volume of essays celebrating absolute freedom of expression. In his preface, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. discovers only two reasons for censorship: fanaticism and fear. Most of this



righteous indignation is directed at right-wing groups like Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum or the Moral Majority. Once in a while they make a token reference to the far more effective campaign being waged by civil rights activists who are bowdlerizing *Huckleberry Finn* or the radical feminists who want to make pornography a violation of women's rights. In one of the strangest *mésalliances* of recent years, fundamentalist preachers and journalists are working in tandem with the feminist (often lesbian) activists in the crusade against dirty movies. On the other side, more libertarian conservatives are resisting any government encroachments on the right to read smut. Politics, as they say, makes strange bedfellows, and the new censorship coalitions are beginning to resemble a weekend at Fire Island.

Discussions of pornography and censorship usually turn on the question of rights. Pornographers argue that we all have a legal and a natural right to read, write, and publish anything we like. Neither the interest of society nor simple prudence can compel anyone to surrender one inch of these inalienable rights. Besides, as they are fond of saying, you can't legislate morality. Feminists also take their stand on rights. Equal rights for women—as defined by all the legislation that is supposed to make ERA unnecessary—means that women are not to be used or exploited as mere things or instruments of a man's pleasure. Since pornography can be shown to incite rape and—still worse—inculcate generally sexist attitudes, women should have the right to sue their exploiters. Fundamentalists make a similar case. Not only is pornography an abomination in the eyes of the faithful, it is a violation of their right to privacy and their right to rear their children in a wholesome environment. Smut is a moral pollution which should be controlled as much as SO_2 in the air or dioxins in the water supply. This healthy environment argument is very similar to the line taken by proponents of sex education. The Sex Information and Education Council of the United States declares that "free access to full and accurate information on all aspects of sexuality is a basic right . . . for children as well as adults." Most fundamentalists would find it difficult to tell the difference between plain old pornography and the kind of "full and accurate information" sometimes provided by SIECUS and Planned Parenthood. The arguments are similar but the premises—and therefore the conclusions—are opposite.

The major trouble with the language of civil rights is that it is very difficult for anyone to arbitrate between competing claims to determine which set of rights and values should prevail. It used to be possible to escape from abstract rights into the more secure ground of the U.S. Constitution. Once upon a time, the Constitution was fairly clear. It forbade Congress to make any laws restricting freedom of speech or freedom of the press. That duty, according to the Tenth Amendment, was left up to the states. It goes without saying that the framers did not intend to protect smut peddlers or child molesters. (In simpler times there were more informal ways of dealing with sociopaths.) The First Amendment does not actually say anything about filthy pictures or blue movies or even dirty novels. In the 18th century freedom of the press meant only that the government would allow newspapers and journals of different parties to express their opinions. But the clarity of the Constitution became utterly fouled up when the

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Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal rights got affixed to the Bill of Rights. The Congress and Supreme Court are now free either to defend or invade the liberties of states, communities, and individuals—so long as it is in the name of equal rights. What they do depends only on the opinions of whoever is in power.

Rather than all this talk of rights, it would be refreshing to hear the censorship question expressed in the language of social obligation. The plain fact is that humankind is not a solitary species like the orangutans, who seem to meet only to mate or quarrel. Men everywhere live in families and communities. They have always exercised some sort of social authority to keep down the excesses of individualism: theft, murder, and rape; worshiping false gods or spitting on the sidewalk. There has never been any question (except among libertarians who don't regard themselves as social animals) about a society's obligation to protect itself or about the duty of citizens to bear the burden of expectation imposed by "the authorities." In different places and times, people may play by different rules, but there is no game without rules. The old proverb, "when in Rome . . ." is not just a comment on human diversity. It is much more a recognition of the social facts of life. Dressing up like a priest may get you a few laughs on *Saturday Night Live,* but when Father Guido Sarducci tried it in the Vatican, he was arrested for impersonating a cleric.

No society has ever failed to censor morals and manners. There is said to be honor among thieves, and even convicts doing hard time apparently cannot abide a child molester. They have a sufficient sense of justice to turn the state's term of imprisonment into a sentence of death. Some societies are as rigid as the Massachusetts Puritans or as tolerant as London in the 1890's. None, however, has repudiated its right—its obligation—to suppress public deviance, whether it is manifested in the form of behavior, the arts, or even conversation. This obligation cannot be expressed as a question of individual rights. It is a collective responsibility for the common good. In this respect, the feminists are as wrong as the pornographers. This is one area where we cannot allow government to divest itself of its responsibilities.

The censor is always with us. In small, uniform communities —a hamlet in the Ozarks—most people know what is expected of them, and there is little enough occasion for either the sheriff or the censor to intrude. The informal system of gossip and shivaree used to be enough. Most of us today, however, live in more complex, pluralistic communities, composed of people from many different backgrounds. A uniform code of morals and manners is as impossible in Chicago as it would be for the whole U.S. Opponents of censorship seize upon this notion of democratic pluralism and conclude that it is impossible either to legislate morality or to impose the ethical perceptions of one group upon another. Still, the mayors and police chiefs of Chicago do not throw up their hands in despair. Because a significant minority of citizens make their living by burglary and mugging or prefer rape to racquetball, this does not prevent the city from legislating on questions of right and wrong or enforcing the moral opinions of the majority.

The question of censorship *is* difficult but not impossible. Once we quit ducking down the blind alleys of civil rights, First Amendment freedoms, and moral relativism, we can confront the facts of life head-on. Mankind has always and will always "legislate morality." Even the advocates of pornography want their activities protected by law. It is a question of a power struggle between opposing moral visions. The Moral Majority wants to defend purity, while the pornographers would agree with D. H. Lawrence (*Pornography and Obscenity*) that the main thing is to "kill the purity-lie." All societies not only have the right to exercise control over words as well as deeds, they all do it. The only question is how far are we willing to go and on what basis. Some varieties of indecency, for example, are tolerated nearly everywhere. It may even have an important social function. In any case, it is usually restricted to certain places and occasions. The Athenians of Pericles' time were not a licentious people. They were notable for their religiosity in an age of skepticism and for the careful watch they kept upon the virtue of their wives and daughters. Nonetheless, once or twice a year at the festivals of Dionysus, the men of Athens were entertained by comedies which travestied their gods and which used a sort of graphic language which still can bring a blush. Everyone knows of the gentlemen's clubs which flourished in Victorian London, to say nothing of the English toleration for the "love that dares not speak its name." Oscar Wilde had to make his vices public before he would be prosecuted. In the United States there used to be places one could go and publications one could order in plain brown wrappers. In fact, most American communities did not attempt to do away absolutely with strip shows or dirty French novels: they only wanted to keep them in their place.

Up until recently, Americans relied on the well-worn distinction between public and private. Private vices, like a taste for exotic art or a collection of designer dresses in a businessman's closet, were conveniently ignored so long as they did not become so public as to create a scandal. At that point, it was felt, connivance became official toleration and toleration turned into encouragement. This doctrine of privacy between consenting adults is still a wholesome one—up to a point. The hard-core pornography of the 1980's is a far cry from *Fanny Hill:* rape, torture, and murder have become commonplace, to say nothing of the ever-expanding market for what is cutely called kiddie porn. Even D. H. Lawrence wanted to censor real pornography "as the attempt to insult sex." It is just possible that our rising rates of sexual violence and child molesting are not entirely unrelated to the injection

(continued on page 35)

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Trivial Spirits

Malcolm Bradbury: *Rates of Exchange;* Alfred A. Knopf; New York.

Vassily Aksyonov: *The Island of Crimea;* Translated by Michael Henry Heim; Random House; New York.

by Robert F. Geary

Signs of massive political fatuity abound. In the face of more than a decade of relentless Soviet arms acquisition, righteous notables in the West chant for a (virtually unilateral) freeze on our nuclear weapons with a disregard for consequences that could make us wish for the days of "Better Red Than Dead," when at least some price for weakness was implicitly acknowledged. Television news programs now solicit the opinion of Tass apparatchiks as if these men were journalists expressing their own considered analyses of events. Presidential hopefuls strive to outbid one another in proclaiming how many lands they would not defend against enemies of this country. All this seems more than routine silliness: the suspicion grows that many in the West no longer can conceive of a world in which we confront an unyielding rival power seeking the peace which comes with absolute mastery. Or, if genuine foes do exist, so the thinking runs, they surely must be susceptible to the enchantments of "communication" or, failing that, to the sanctions of so-called "world opinion." Moreover, many appear not to recognize in the West any values worth defending at more than a nominal cost. Together these attitudes generate a weightless solipsism which denies the fearful and enduring divisions of most of this century.

Two recent novels deal unflinchingly with the profound and enlarging gap between what, on the one hand, much of the West wishes to believe about the Soviet Union and its satellite states and what, on the other, constitute the implacable dynamics of totalitarianism. Indeed, English writer Malcolm Bradbury's *Rates of Exchange* and Russian exile Vassily Aksyonov's *The Island of Crimea* share numerous similarities. Both novels treat international intrigue in a largely comic mode, creating an unusual blend of adventure, suspense, satire, and occasional pathos. Each novel, furthermore, has as its central character a figure marked by a disquieting hollowness that appears a symptom of our age.

Malcolm Bradbury's *Rates of Exchange* is less overtly political: a (sometimes sad) comedy of the cultural exchange visit of one British linguist, Professor Petworth, to an unnamed country in Eastern Europe where he aspires, vainly, to do nothing more exciting than be away from his burdensome wife and give a few canned lectures. But the middle-aged, thoroughly *bourgeois* professor encounters more than the frustrations he has come to expect as a jaded "cultural traveller"—the delays, the mix-ups, the occasional official bullying, and the constant mispronunciations of his name (as Pitwit, Pervert, Petwurt, and the like). Two women, one his official guide and the other a fascinating novelist, seek to lure him from his academical half-life into a confrontation with a reality fuller and more dangerous than exists on the path from lecture hall to faculty lunch to cocktail party. To travel from the West to a Soviet-dominated country is not, after all, to visit a place distanced only geographically where the people are "really just the same when you get to know them." Decades of Party control have generated deep and painful distortions in the patterns of human feeling and action. These differences and the system behind them, both of which Petworth is temperamentally inclined to ignore, form the dark backdrop to the tribulations of the bumbling professor.

Two related metaphors structure the contrasts of West and East. One, appropriately, turns on language. The other also involves transactions, financial this time rather than verbal: it is the rate of exchange of the novel's title. Bradbury skillfully develops the permutations of both figures without letting either become merely clever. Through both the reader comes to perceive clearly what our day's version of Sterne's sentimental traveler would wish away—the truth that the physical and mental walls built by communist despotisms are not to be easily demolished by gushes of "interpersonal communication." Two centuries ago Sterne's Parson Yorick could travel France without a passport (despite the hostilities between that country and England), overcome cultural impediments, and achieve emotional "connections," however tentative and ambiguous. As Petworth's journey shows, ours is a more complicated and harsher time.

Language, for example, raises barriers more daunting than those causing the book's amusing malapropisms and double *entendres.* There is the formidable "grammar" of military control evident in the line of armed soldiers at the country's only commercial airport. Indeed, in this land of pervasive censorship and suspicion, words themselves have a different weight; an airport inspector handles Petworth's worn and harmless lectures as one would a potentially lethal package that might hold a bomb. The inescapable bugs, hidden cameras, and informers distort private and public speech; and, in so doing, they attack each person's very selfhood. Words, therefore, are precious, and language becomes a battlefield as the regime overnight replaces one dialect with another as the new "official" tongue. Behind the ensuing riots is a passion to retain some hold on the past, the local, the nonpolitical, a passion the reverse of

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the cultural and linguistic rootlessness implicit in Petworth's standard lecture on "The English Language as a Medium of International Communication."

Similarly, the otherness of the communist state manifests itself not so much in the chaos of the country's five rates of currency exchange as in the prices the system exacts for activities, like writing, which to us are comparatively free. Marisja Lubijova, Petworth's lively and protective guide, pays with mindless orthodoxy for a job which lets her on occasion escape some of the drabness of the people's paradise. For the bewitching Katya Princip to publish her books the cost is steeper yet, involving complex measures of self-abasement and betrayal. The artists and teachers dutifully parading on the National Day of Culture are also bartering a portion of dignity in return for some security and the opportunity to practice their profession or create art, in however circumscribed a fashion.

Yet for all the grim bargains they have had to make, it is the women who possess a reality Petworth lacks and which they try to give him. Petworth, described as a man who had "not much soul to start with," resists living more fully; in fact, he scarcely seems capable of so doing. The professor may strike readers as an academic counterpart of John Le Carré's ashen-souled George Smiley; but if Petworth's spiritual anemia is to be taken as having representative significance, it is not as a sign of Cold War burn-out but as a symptom of what the author elsewhere in the novel suggests is the "provisionality" of the West in contrast to the East's solidity. In any event, Petworth creates only limited interest or concern on the reader's part. Despite the journey filled with jolts to his inveterate complacency, he returns to Heathrow a man who, in several senses, has "nothing to declare." Since his capacity for suffering appears limited, our sympathy goes to those characters who remain behind in a land whose otherness has touched only slightly the sensibilities of this lightweight traveler.

Against a background of fast cars, luxurious living, double agents, and high-stakes international maneuvering, Vassily Aksyonov's *The Island of Crimea* explores more directly the theme of the failure of will afflicting the West. Aksyonov's first novel to appear since he came to this country in 1980 has as its imaginative base the premise that the Crimea is an island, instead of a peninsula, which the White Army held against the Red in the Revolution and which has developed into a wealthy and free capitalist showcase in the shadow of the U.S.S.R.—in short, Russia's Taiwan. With this fictive postulate, the book could easily have become a thin political fable, but Aksyonov creates a detailed and believable setting in which recognizably contemporary currents are modified in ways appropriate to this fictional land. Generating the novel's action, for instance, is a movement for reunification with the Soviet Union called the Common Fate League, an entity headed by the book's main character, the dashing, liberal newspaper publisher, racing car driver, and celebrity, Andrei Luchnikov. The movement is no simple stand-in for, say, unilateral disarmament; for part of its appeal is a complex longing the Crimeans feel to be part of their mother country, even a guilt at having escaped the horrors communism has inflicted on her. But in the dilettantish liberalism of Luchnikov, in his father's stalwart dignity, and his back-packing son's radical agitation for the rights and the (nonexistent) culture of the island's older "Yaki" population, we recognize analogues to the situation in the West.

The book's clarity of focus, unfortunately, does not equal its vividness of setting. A conflicting mix of subgenres contributes to the novel's sense of diffusion; such is the blend of comedy, political intrigue, and satire that, not quite knowing what sort of book he is in, the reader does not take seriously enough the dangers either to the protagonist or to the island itself. Although there are a number of well-drawn characters (one of the best being a Soviet diplomat who cannot believe the Crimeans are seriously contemplating

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giving up their autonomy), their very profusion in this fairly short work detracts from a sense of direction. Not until the international race car rally in the late chapters does the novel regain its initial momentum. Nor does the main character sustain excitement. A playboy who is boring and egocentric, a political figure without intense ambition or conviction, Andrei Luchnikov emerges as something of a classy poseur, a man heading a potentially suicidal movement simply because it is fashionably contrary. There exists at the core of the man a nullity which makes it hard for the reader to care much about his fate; worse, his superficiality invites us to lose track of the stakes involved in his trendy, self-righteously foolish cause. (Again, as in Bradbury's novel, it is a woman, here Luchnikov's compromised Soviet mistress, who has a depth missing in the leading figure.)

The indistinctness of the novel's protagonist may result from the author's disturbing vision of the West as being so fundamentally self-preoccupied that it cannot come to terms with even the most dangerous forms of external reality. His treatment of television's ability to trivialize to the level of gossip even national catastrophe suggests as much; it has the wit and bite of the satire of a writer who comes fresh to our culture from one where they play for keeps. Equally insightful is Aksyonov's portrayal of the Common Fate League (whose acronym in Russia is SOS). The League's appeal combines snobbish guilt over the island's prosperity with a self-congratulatory, semireligious notion of the Crimea becoming a leaven which will alter the direction of the Soviet Union. Adding to the mix is a fake realism about the consequences of the merger, as Luchnikov's *Courier* runs pieces exposing selected and not especially horrendous shortcomings of the Soviet system; such hints of darkness have the effect of a dare, making the public more willing to embrace the challenge. The most powerful ingredient in the League's appeal, however, is the sheer inability of the island's comfortable population to believe that this movement is not just another routine political spectacle, a media event, which will in the end not disrupt the pleasing rhythms of their affluent lives. Things, they feel, will go on nicely; arrangements of some sort will be worked out; somewhere there must be insurance coverage against genuine national disaster.

In theme, tone, and structure, both *Rates of Exchange* and *The Island of Crimea* attempt to reflect the crazy quilt nature of attitudes in the West toward the continuing superpower struggle. With the weakening in the West of what is now derisively tagged as the "Cold War mentality," no single pattern of thinking has come to dominate. An older realism, somewhat muted, continues; leftist revisionism has achieved some status; more prevalent than either, however, may be the indisposition to think seriously, if at all, of the conflict whose realities we were once willing to face, whatever our other political views. Now we ignore it, wish it away, or deride it as antiquated. The problem for both novelists is to embody mass vacuousness in characters who, if they are to be more than satiric targets, need to have an intellectual and emotional richness which the authors see as missing from the contemporary picture. To write of a triviality of spirit without creating trivial main characters who lose our interest is the difficulty neither Bradbury nor Aksyonov fully solves. But both have captured an important dimension of our situation and in so doing have created enjoyable and worthwhile political novels. Since in each fiction the laughter, the cocktail party chatter, and the trendy poses halt in pain before the realities of regimes which have changed little in decades, we must hope the authors have not also given us works which prove prophetic. □

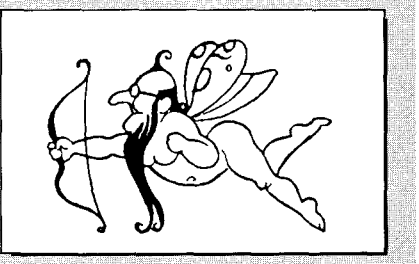
LIBERAL CULTURE

Biology Is Not Destiny

A breakthrough in feminist biology reported in the *CoEvolution Quarterly*:

Men Can Nurse Babies, Too

Some anthropologists who are studying whether there is a biological basis for having a division of labor by sex think that nursing a baby could be men's work, too . . . . Increased breast size is not necessary for milk production, although it is usually a result . . . . What is necessary for milk production is hormonal stimulation, and it doesn't have to be achieved through taking hormone drugs. The mother who has just given birth has internal hormone stimulation, but so can any individual, man or woman, who puts an infant to the breasts for a period of time and lets it suck . . . . But the ability of men to nurse is a long-forgotten and denied human species survival mechanism enabling infants to be nourished in cases of necessity. That is, it is denied among western 'civilized' societies. In modern day pretechnological groups, men are often seen to put babies to the breast from time to time to passify [sic] them . . . . Cultures which encourage males to play exclusively masculine roles and females exclusively maternal roles may be decreasing the male's production of female sex hormones, and vice versa. The gender roles that our culture assigns us have as much effect on our biology as biology has on determining our gender roles.



Of course, as more and more men begin to nurse their babies, even the sky is no longer the limit. Once men have experienced the joys of nursing, they may be ready for the ultimate thrill of motherhood—maternity. □

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Weapons of Despair

Kosta Tsipis: *Arsenal: Understanding Weapons in the Nuclear Age;* Simon & Schuster; New York.

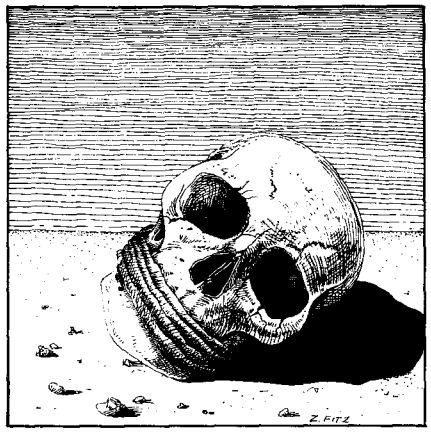
Freeman Dyson: *Weapons and Hope;* Harper & Row; New York.

by William R. Hawkins

The peace movement has become a permanent fixture of democratic politics. The movement is most visible when its members are marching in the streets, but it is most effective when there is nothing to march against. During the Vietnam War there were many demonstrations, and this activity has been renewed during the Reagan Administration. Central America and the nuclear rearmament program are the current triggers. During most of the 1970's, however, the streets were empty as American policy was passive. From Indochina through the Persian Gulf to Africa and Panama, the U.S. was in retreat. At the strategic level unilateral disarmament and détente were in full swing.

The peace movement plays on the natural fear of violent death and hardship resulting from war. It has been most effective in the West not only because it is granted the unique freedom to operate, but because the materially affluent nations of the West are susceptible to its message. The West is composed of "consumption" economies, "post-industrial" societies, and status quo powers with "progressive" cultures where most people simply want to be left alone to enjoy the fruits of past success. In a decadent society, as people forget the degree of effort that was needed for their civilization to attain its lofty peak of wealth and well-being, the necessity for continued effort is often overlooked.

The strongest argument against pacifism has always been the appeal to a tough-minded realism. The man in the street sees enough of human nature to reject the idealism of the academician and the clergyman who promise a world based on goodwill and brotherhood. Peace activists can sway a crowd with fear and demagoguery so long as they are unopposed, but they do not stand up well in debate. Usually this is because they have not done their homework. They are disinclined to study weapons or strategy because they are convinced that war is nothing more than irrational murder and destruction. The advent of nuclear weapons has misled them into believing that the world has been transformed, thus making the study of history irrelevant.



There are many within the current disarmament crowd who realize this weakness, and have attempted to provide an array of data to use in debate. They offer enough information to sound authoritative, but not enough to disturb the entrenched opinions within the movement which were derived by ideology. Ground Zero has been particularly good at this, even managing to sound objective at times. *Arsenal* by MIT physicist Kosta Tsipis is another example. Its tone is moderate and straightforward. The first 255 pages are devoted to the technical aspects of weapons design in terms that can be understood by the intelligent layman. Following this is a 68-page section of appendices which contain more details on such subjects as inertial navigation, phased array radar, and electromagnetic radiation, complete with diagrams and equations.

The format is one of objective, scientific inquiry. However, Tsipis is not a disinterested observer. He serves on the board of directors of several organizations committed to disarmament: SANE, the Council for a Liveable World and the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, famous for its "doomsday" clock. This is important to note as one reads through this book, not because he distorts his information (much of which is quite useful) but because he leaves many things out which would undermine his position.

This is most apparent in his discussion of missile defense systems. He discusses the U.S. Spartan/Sprint ABM in detail (a limited deployment was made, then scrapped) before devoting another chapter to particle beams and lasers. His conclusion is that none of these can work. But what he means is that none could provide an impenetrable defense: "The fundamental problem of an ABM system . . . is that if it does not work perfectly, it is no use at all." This is nonsense. There can never be a perfect defense. Yet even with all of his misgivings, Tsipis concludes that the Spartan/Sprint system could have been 60 percent effective against a massive (1,000 missiles) Soviet attack. The amount of damage limitation that would represent would pay for the system many times over and could very well mean the difference between whether American society survives or collapses in a war. And this is without the important advances in computers made since the ABM was scrapped and which Tsipis concedes would have further improved the system.

He does not mention that the Soviets continue to develop and deploy ABM's. The newest Soviet ABM is the SA-12

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which is roughly similar to the Sprint. They have also built a massive phased array radar at Abalakova to direct ABM's in violation of the ABM Treaty. This treaty seems a dead letter as far as the U.S.S.R. is concerned. They have violated it repeatedly since its inception. This gives the lie to Tsipis's claim that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. signed the treaty in the misguided belief that it was furthering arms control and détente. The Soviets signed it in order to nip in the bud the deployment of a technologically advanced U.S. defense screen designed to protect American forces from a Soviet first-strike.

Tsipis's discussion of particle beams and lasers is also flawed. He maintains that fuel limitations would prevent their use against large-scale attacks. This is because he insists on using chemical fuels as power sources. Hauling three million-plus tons of fuel into orbit to supply BMD satellites is absurd and would have killed instantly any further discussion of space-based defense systems if that had been the only alternative available. But it is not. Nuclear reactors capable of producing 150 kw are considered adequate to power the Army's White Horse particle-beam generator. Los Alamos Scientific Laboratories has already designed a space reactor which produces 100 kw and reactors up to 1,100 kw were considered feasible even 20 years ago. Another application of nuclear power for lasers has been given much attention. A small explosion could provide the energy pulse to fire up to 50 lasers simultaneously at 50 different targets. This would be a one-time use because the explosion would destroy the satellite, but the trade-off of one laser satellite for 50 ICBM's carrying up to 400 warheads is very attractive. ICBM's are vulnerable during launch.

As with the ABM, Tsipis again fails to mention Soviet work in this field. The Soviets have conducted a series of experiments at both their Semipalatinsk and Sarova sites involving particle beams as defensive weapons against missiles. They have used underground nuclear explosions to generate the massive flow of electricity needed to power a beam projector inside the atmosphere. American physicists gave up on this problem because they did not believe that the explosive generation of electricity was feasible. Tsipis still does not think so, yet the Soviets have done it. Soviet backwardness is not something which can be taken for granted.

Tsipis exaggerates the vulnerability of space systems to attack, particularly to electromagnetic pulses (EMP) from nuclear detonations. EMP can knock out anything electrical, but it can also be defended against. Research done at the National Defense University has estimated that components can be shielded from EMP for a mere 10 percent increase in cost. The use of Extremely High Frequency transmissions (EHF) can overcome EMP disturbances in the communication links through the atmosphere and space while ground communications using fiber optics are free of EMP disruptions. None of these factors are mentioned by Tsipis.

Tsipis also does not mention the High Frontier concept endorsed by President Reagan. High Frontier does not depend on nuclear power, lasers, or particle beams. It envisions a ring of satellites capable of spotting Soviet launches and firing an interceptor rocket which would spray the ballistic path of the ICBM with ceramic "buckshot." This buckshot would rip the missile apart at 17,000 mph. It can be built with existing technology. The American lead in microelectronics and the Space Shuttle can provide a strategic advantage that the Soviets cannot duplicate.

Besides the utility of a defense system in time of war, such a system would also strengthen deterrence. Tsipis argues that a first-strike is unlikely because there are too many uncertain factors to give the attacker the necessary confidence to risk an exchange. If this is true under our "open skies" posture, the uncertainties must multiply if a defense system is in operation. Why is there such opposition to missile defense? It seems illogical, given the fear of nuclear annihilation which the public feels.

The peace movement opposes active defense measures for a variety of ideological reasons. They oppose any new military system which may divert funds from domestic programs. They resist the idea of moving the arms race into the "pure" environment of space, as if man could go somewhere without taking his problems with him. But there is another, less attractive reason. Being vulnerable to a Soviet attack makes American leaders timid. It acts as a restraint on U.S. resistance to Soviet expansion out of a fear of confrontation. The Soviets know that the U.S. would not (and could not, given current force structures) strike first, so they are not as restrained. Many on the Left prefer this situation either out of an ideological affinity for the Soviet Union or for the

In the Mail

***Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature,* Vol. 36, No. 4, edited by Joseph Schwartz; Marquette University; Milwaukee, WI.** What has Christ to do with Apollo? the Puritans once asked. In articles that combine literary scholarship and Christian witness, the contributors to *Renascence* offer answers.

***Axiology: The Science of Values,* abbreviated edition, by Archie J. Bahm; World Books; Albuquerque, NM.** Anyone who can cheerfully dismiss Plato and Logical Realism in a footnote knows little about science or values.

***Bad News for Modern Man: An Agenda for Christian Activism* by Franky Schaeffer; Crossway Books; Westchester, IL.** Mr. Schaeffer fears that the salt of evangelical Christianity may be losing its savor. He is probably right, but his impromptu agenda stops short of positive solutions. □

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various radical causes which Moscow supports. This is manifest in the arguments, echoed by Tsipis, that for the U.S. to gain an advantage in space would be destabilizing because the Soviets would be in an inferior position. The Soviet threat to America would be reduced, clearly a good thing to the country at large, but a possibility which sends tremors of anxiety through the Left.

Tsipis occasionally engages in misdirection. At one point, he states that the U.S. has 900 warheads aimed at Soviet cities. In the next paragraph he describes the damage that a one-megaton (MT) blast could do to a city. He not only exaggerates this (in his chapter on counterforce, he downgrades the power of nuclear blasts to argue against the practicality of a first strike) but gives the impression that the 900 warheads previously mentioned are in the megaton class. They are not. The largest Minuteman warhead is 350 kilotons (KT), that is 0.35 MT. Most are only 0.17 MT. The warheads on the Poseidon submarine-launched missiles are smaller still: 0.04 MT. The difference is significant. To create an overpressure of 5 psi above Moscow (enough to knock down masonry buildings but not steel and concrete highrises) would require six 1-MT warheads or 48 40-KT warheads. Not all warheads are the same, nor is the cliché of "one bomb, one city" accurate.

Tsipis also knows more about physics than he does history. He claims that in World War I aircraft "were used to lob hand grenades into trenches or to strafe troops in the field, but not to drop bombs." He further claims that the first attack on a city was in the Spanish Civil War by the Nationalists. As a matter of fact, both Germany and France developed bomber forces before World War I. The Germans had a fleet of Zeppelins built for this mission and followed with Gotha and R-bombers in 1917. All were used against London. The French developed a separate air arm under the Supreme Commander for use against cities behind the battle lines. This was not unexpected and there were many bombing scares in the first days of the war. Technology limited the effects of such attacks, but the attempts were made and the incentive to improve was felt.

Tsipis's purpose is to provide the public with information with which they can press for a "democratic" say in military policy. His aim is to take authority out of the hands of the experts and place it in the hands of people more vulnerable to the propaganda of the peace movement. This is also the aim of Freeman Dyson. Dyson is another physicist, but less analytical than Tsipis in his presentation. He has worked for the Department of Defense and he professes certain sympathies for "the warriors" as individuals, though his overriding identification is with "the victims" (i.e. everyone else), a dichotomy he uses throughout his book. He has been associated with Princeton's Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and his views are similar to Tsipis in regard to counterforce, missile defense, and new weapons.

Dyson rejects many of the doomsday prophesies of the movement, arguing that books such as Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth* are no more scientifically valid than were *On the Beach* or *Dr. Strangelove* 20 years ago. Dyson believes that for all life on earth to be endangered would require 10 or more nuclear wars. His fear is that once such a war is fought, the psychological barrier will be broken and the use of nuclear weapons will become commonplace. He also acknowledges that Robert Oppenheimer and the other scientists who opposed the H-bomb were wrong in their predictions that thermonuclear weapons would constantly grow in power. Nuclear weapons are actually becoming smaller, trading accuracy for power and reducing collateral damage.

However, he does not let technical factors influence his argument unless they support disarmament. His treatment of Helen Caldicott, leader of the antiwar Physicians for Social Responsibility is revealing. He admits that "Her style is personal rather than objective. The substance of her argument is anecdotal rather than analytic. She is careless about technical details." Yet, he finds her persuasive. "It is easy to understand how she has captured the hearts and minds of people around the world." He has concluded that "the two primary agents for abolishing nuclear weapons must be international negotiations and the aroused conscience of mankind." Caldicott, Schell, and even *On the Beach* contribute to arousing emotions which support his own ends.

Dyson's attitude toward defense is disquieting. "It is meaningless to count the lives saved" through counterforce, missile defense, or fallout shelters. This is because nuclear war is so full of unknowns as to become useless to think about. The only way to save lives is to disarm. He recounts a conversation he had with Swiss civil-defense officials who expressed wonder at how easy it had been to build shelters for the bulk of their population. They wanted to know if the data they had used for the effects of nuclear weapons had been understated. He told them that their information was correct, but that he still opposed shelters. To him, shelters are an ethical problem: "The building of public shelters by a government heavily armed with nuclear missiles created an image of a country setting out to massacre its enemies while keeping its own population safe from retaliation." He considers this to be a "nightmare" image. But surely the image of your own countrymen unprotected and under attack is the nightmare.

Dyson leans towards unilateral disarmament if mutual disarmament proves too difficult to negotiate. He seems to believe that if the U.S. disarmed, the Soviets would follow. Domestic pressure would build for diverting resources to consumer goods production. He thinks that the Soviet military would support nuclear disarmament.

The Soviet Union has on many occasions overrun, annexed, or occupied

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> neighboring countries, from the Baltic States in 1940 to Afghanistan in 1979. In every case the purpose was to dominate the neighboring country politically, not destroy it physically.

The Soviet military should favor a nonnuclear world because it would be "matched to the actual style of Soviet expansion." It seems to escape his attention that a Soviet monopoly of nuclear weapons would make expansion much easier by overawing any conventional defense. He cites Norway as an example of a successful nonnuclear defense policy (an idea he picked up from George Kennan) without realizing that Norway can only adopt such a stance because the U.S. stands behind NATO with a nuclear guarantee.

There is an important place for scientists and their technical arguments in defense policy. However, the works of Tsipis and Dyson are more than this. As an earlier scientist, Francis Bacon, observed:

> Walled towns, stored arsenals and armories, goodly races of horses, chariots or war, elephants, ordnance, artillery and the like; all this is but a sheep in a lion's skin except the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike.

It is the undermining of the people's will to defend themselves that Tsipis and Dyson are really about. This debate is the decisive battle of the next war. □

Bulgarian Death Squad

Georgi Markov: *The Truth That Killed;* Ticknor & Fields; New York.

Claire Sterling: *The Time of the Assassins: Anatomy of an Investigation;* Holt, Rinehart & Winston; New York.

by Charles A. Moser

In 1962 a one-time engineer, Georgi Markov, rose meteorically to the upper reaches of the Bulgarian literary elite upon the publication of a novel entitled *Men,* which brought him the privilege of membership in the Writer's Union. In 1964 he was one of the first literary intellectuals to receive the personal attentions of the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Todor Zhivkov, when he commenced a shrewd campaign to defuse potential discontent. In 1969, for the 25th anniversary of the Bulgarian Communist Party's seizure of power, he was commissioned to write a play entitled *Communists* depicting the legendary heroes of the resistance movement during World War II in his country. But the authorities banned his play because it was intellectually too honest, and late that same year he left his homeland forever.

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Settling in London, Markov achieved remarkable success, continuing his writing career in Bulgarian and English. But he also felt a powerful need to describe and analyze his life in the land he still loved deeply, and so about 1975 he began the memoirs of which this book is a condensed version. He then broadcast that record of life back to Bulgaria through Radio Free Europe, apparently to a large listening audience. In time he received death threats and harassing calls. He did not allow them to deter him (although any Bulgarian knows such threats can be very real) and in September 1978 fell victim to a lethal poison contained in a pellet shot into his leg by a device possibly concealed in a very English umbrella. He was just a little short of his 50th year. Markov's wife, Annabel, an intelligent Englishwoman worthy of her husband's mettle, made sure that the monument on his grave tells all who see it that he died "in the cause of freedom." Now she has arranged for the publication of this even more important monument to him and to that freedom of speech for which he gave his life.

The book's dust jacket calls him "Bulgaria's Solzhenitsyn," and Markov does display something of the Russian writer's intellectual honesty and literary ability. However, Markov describes not the horrors of the Gulag and its victims fighting for sheer survival, but rather ordinary Bulgarians in what might be called "normal" situations of a communist society, but still situations which can frequently pose excruciating moral dilemmas. It is those dilemmas which Markov explores as he seeks to understand the deeper motivations of those who established and still sustain the communist regime which marks its 40th anniversary in 1984.

The Bulgarian communist movement before 1944 could draw idealists who were truly willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of a "better future," but who were also very human, as Markov discovered when he obtained access to the police files of the old regime while working on *Communists.* For example, the files recorded that the last words of one of the genuine heroes of the resistance before his executioners were: "Another glass of water, please!" These people were not the stuff of the exaggerated myths which the regime wanted at the time, but human enough to go mad as did one partisan when offered a brutal choice by the police: if he betrayed his comrades, he would not have to serve his sentence and false documents would be planted to make him seem innocent of any betrayal; but if he refused to provide information, he would not only be executed, but "they would also leave 'proof' that he had

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betrayed his friends, so that everybody would forever look on him as a traitor and spit on his grave."

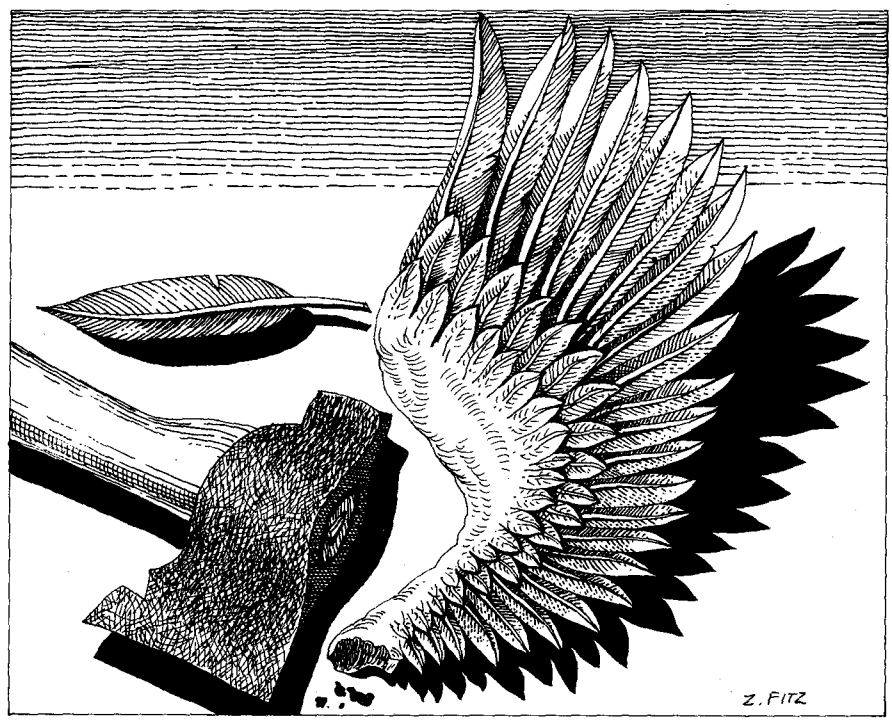
But if the communist movement did attract the idealistic, including especially the young, once in power a communist regime is absolutely insensitive "to moral beauty, to any show of nobility": "their response to the gesture of the knight who throws down his gauntlet," Markov writes, "is to ... hit him with a stone in the back of the neck." A communist regime deliberately creates a system based upon envy and hatred which, unfortunately, channels the natural inclinations of many individuals in any society. As Markov points out, only fools and incompetents can be effectively united as a political force; truly creative people are too independent of mind to follow a party line.

For all the terror of the revolutionary period, there were those who stood against the regime even under Bulgarian Stalinism. One of them was an anonymous "comrade M" (in fact Markov himself) arrested for participating in an opposition group which had planned to publish an illegal bulletin. Many of its members were cruelly tortured in prison, but not M, whose interrogator sought to convert him through persuasion. Then on September 9, the regime's anniversary, he was permitted to go home for two days, sent out into the festive streets with their banners, bouquets, and laughing faces chanting "STALIN—CHERVENKOV" with energetic enthusiasm. As his interrogator had surmised, the experience cured him of his ambition to liberate people who seemed so content in their servitude, and so oblivious of those suffering on their behalf. He resolved to make his peace with the regime. "That was his justification," Markov says of comrade M. "I am not sure, however, that it satisfied him. Because he knew that he was one of those who conveniently justify their own sins by the sins of others."

As a leading writer in a small country, Markov had the chance to observe certain famous Bulgarian communist leaders at close hand. He offers two brief but repulsive vignettes of Georgi Dimitrov, the "hero" of the Reichstag Fire Trial and the first prime minister of communist Bulgaria. He provides a more human portrait of Vulko Chervenkov, the leader the festive crowds cheered that September 9. Much later, after he had fallen from power, he wandered alone into a dance hall at a seaside resort filled with semi-dissident intellectuals who had suffered under his regime, and who drove him into the night by singing the pro-communist national anthem as a sign of contempt. The most interesting portion of Markov's book, though, describes his personal acquaintance with Todor Zhivkov, first secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party since 1954, and faithful servant of his Soviet masters.

Zhivkov launched his campaign to cultivate potential dissidents in the arts a short time before Khrushchev fell from power. Markov found much to admire on the personal level in Zhivkov, but he also realized how much damage Zhivkov inflicted upon Bulgarian literature and culture by reigning in "Bulgarian potential Solzhenitsyns," in Markov's words. Sometimes Zhivkov could blunt the power of dissident criticism simply by doing small favors. And he knew how to employ the rod as well.

Marxists preach the theoretical supremacy of economic forces and politics in the world, but in practice they perceive the importance of individual example and leadership. Although he bent for a time—and Markov is usually quite honest about his own rationalizations—in the end he resolved to set a moral example by exchanging all the privileges he enjoyed in Bulgaria for the uncertain future in the West, and to speak the truth even in the face of death. By his death he affirmed the ultimate superficiality of economic interests and politics, and thereby denied the foundation stone of communist doctrine. After a successful life he died a successful death, in a manner of speaking: it appropriately completed the example he had



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provided in life, despite communist expertise at moral assassinations as well (one of them wrote of him after he left Bulgaria: "We hope that in the West they know how to bury dogs"). Though the communists may be blind to moral nobility, they harbor a lurking fear that a moment may come when the festive crowds in the Sofia streets chanting their well-worn slogans will be transformed into a cleansing force moved by moral indignation and understanding, as happened however briefly in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, or Poland in 1980-81. The ways of mass national psychology are mysterious, but there are moments when the power of moral example alone can move an entire people —not for long, perhaps, but long enough.

The communist recognition of the force of leadership, including moral leadership, almost surely lies behind the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate John Paul II in May of 1981. The men in the Kremlin had seen the Pope's "divisions" when he visited Poland; they knew he was intimately involved with the rise of the Solidarity movement, which threatened the foundations of communist rule in Poland and perhaps elsewhere in Eastern Europe; and they realized that he was restoring the Church in the Free World as well. Under the circumstances (since they see themselves as engaged in a war with the Free World in any case) they had no objection in principle to an attempt on the Pope's life. Their only concern was that they should not seem to bear responsibility for it.

In *The Time of the Assassins* Claire Sterling traces Mehmet Ali Agca's career through many thickets, including his involvement with mostly rightist Turkish terrorist groups; his connections with a Bulgarian firm which apparently specializes in smuggling drugs to the West and arms into Turkey to all factions in order to destabilize that society as much as possible; his evidently well-financed wanderings through Europe; his links with Bulgarian officials in Italy, some of whom abruptly returned to Bulgaria once a genuine investigation began. Only very recently, three full years after the event, have indictments been handed down by the careful Italian authorities against certain individuals, including Bulgarians, alleged to have been involved in the conspiracy.

A tenacious investigative journalist, Sterling has shaped a great amount of material into a case which anyone who reads the record objectively can scarcely refute, although in such an extensive investigation there are inevitably errors of detail, and the book could assuredly have profited from the efforts of a good editor in organization and the elimination of repetitions which sometimes become irritating. But it is clear that the Soviets had a strong interest in eliminating the Pope, and that the Bulgarian intelligence service—which the Soviet Union wholly controls in such matters and which had extensive contacts with the Turkish Mafia—painstakingly prepared Agca as a hired assassin whom it might, in fact, have decided to use against Lech Walesa. Instead it directed him against the Pope, evidently calculating on eliminating the assassin after the assassination. But the plot did not succeed, and after an interval of about a year Agca realized what had happened to him and provided his interrogators with specific information about it.

More interesting than the conspiracy itself, and certainly of more importance for world affairs, is the West's reaction to the very notion that the Soviets might have organized a scheme to murder the Pope. The first inclination of Western officials—as in the case of the Kennedy assassination—was to deny that there had been any plot at all, to assert that it was all the doing of a single "known crazy." When the Italian investigator,

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles of Culture*

Church ± State

"Indirectly, the products of American mass culture also support denigration of the U.S. more at the cultural than political level. 'They look at *Dallas* and their heart swells,' said an English intellectual, commenting on the kind of confirmation such programs provide of the stereotyped, negative views of life in the United States. A leader of the CND told me that on his visit to the U.S. he was surprised at the vehemence of criticism directed at American policies from the pulpits of the churches in this country."

—from "European Anti-Americanism: Nothing New on the Western Front" by Paul Hollander

ALSO

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Judge Martella, began methodically gathering the evidence of an extensive conspiracy, Western intelligence organizations not only would not assist him, they even suggested that he was the victim of "disinformation" designed to establish a Bulgarian connection where in fact there was none (although it is very unclear who might wish to manufacture such disinformation). And if it should in the future be proven juridically that a plot extended at least as far as Bulgaria, Western agencies, including especially the CIA, will seek to act as though the whole matter were of no concern.

Sterling understands why Western governments have so strenuously denied the obvious, although at one point she weakens sufficiently to suggest that the explanation is purely bureaucratic. Western officials who believe they hold the fate of the world in their hands find it impossible to contemplate the possibility that they are dealing with regimes which think it quite permissible to assassinate prominent opponents; which operate by conspiracy and deceit, and with which, therefore, one can reach no meaningful agreements; with regimes, in short, which are unswervingly dedicated to the West's destruction. A responsible official in a Western government who truly came to see this would face the prospect of taking strong action to avert mortal peril when he is surrounded by well-intentioned individuals who simply cannot believe that the situation is in fact so grim. And yet the historical record is horribly clear: We have, to take the most recent examples, the slaughter of millions of ordinary people in Cambodia and Afghanistan, the assassination of Georgi Markov and the attempt on the Pope's life, and the murder of 269 people on KAL flight 007. The resulting schizophrenia among the statesmen of the Free World is strikingly illustrated in President Reagan's nationally televised speech of September 1983 on the subject of the Korean airliner. In one breath he spoke of the Soviet Union as a "society which wantonly disregards individual rights and the value of human life," but then virtually with the next he called upon it to apologize and "join the rest of the world in working out a system to protect against this ever happening again." No apology was tendered, of course. And this spring, at a Moscow "Day of Anti-Aircraft Defenses," a Soviet aviation marshal extolled the act which Reagan had rightly termed one of "inhuman brutality," and the man who apparently committed that act received an award for heroism.

Until this split in the Western mind is resolved in favor of a clear understanding of the nature of our enemy, and until action comes to be based upon that understanding, the Free World will continue inevitably to lose ground. Solzhenitsyn, Georgi Markov, Claire Sterling, and countless others have told us the truth. If we refuse to listen, we shall learn the truth through bitter experience. □

Webs of Culture

Clifford Geertz: *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology;* Basic Books; New York.

by Stephen L. Tanner

Paul Elmer More once noted the presence of demons in human society: "The Molec of violence, the Beelzebub of treachery, the Belial of lying flatteries, the Mammon of gold, the Mephistopheles of skepticism, and others of the Stygian Council escaped through the open gates of hell." Important among these is a demon who so wears the robe of authority that he passes for an angel of light. His great mischief derives from the fact that the finer minds are often the most susceptible to his enticements. He is the Demon of the Absolute, whom More identifies as rationalism or reason run amuck. Reason, as long as it is content to accept the actual data of experience in its diversity and particularity, is our constant guide and friend, one of our diviner faculties. But when it ignores facts, develops ideologies and sets up its own absolutes as the truth for us to act upon, it becomes dangerous and demonic. There are no absolutes in nature, says More: "They are phantoms created by reason itself in its own likeness, delusions which, when once evoked, usurp the field of reality and bring endless confusion in their train." An example of the Demon at work is the wrangling between those who conceive the ultimate reality of things as immutable unity and those who reduce the universe to pure flux and multiplicity.

Clifford Geertz is a kind of anthropological exorcist stalking the Demon of the Absolute. Always suspicious of systematizing, he warns that "the more orderly and straightforward a particular course looks the more it seems ill-advised." Instead of trying to explain social phenomena by "grand textures of cause and effect," he examines them within "local frames of awareness." He resists structuralism "as a sort of high-tech rationalism" believing that the logic of a culture is to be found, not presupposed. Tacking between fine-combed observations and synoptic characterization, between "the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure," his method is "to attain what generalities it can by orchestrating contrasts rather than isolating regularities or abstracting types." The world is a various place, he is fond of emphasizing, and

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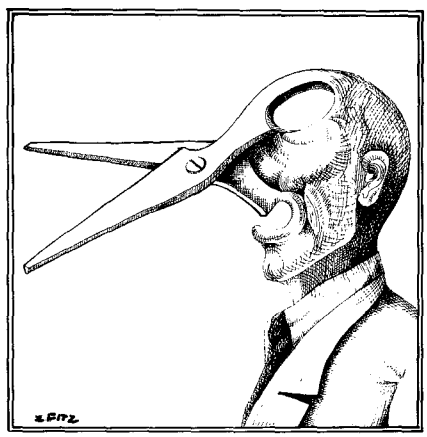
more can be gained by confronting "the grand actuality" than by wishing it away in a haze of "forceless generalities and false comforts."

As a spokesman for the trend in anthropology emphasizing symbols and meanings, Geertz is highly regarded. He studied at Harvard, MIT, and Stanford and has taught at Berkeley, Chicago, and Oxford. He is now a professor at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study. He has written six books treating the cultures of Bali, Java, Indonesia, and Morocco, and his award-winning *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) has been widely read. *Local Knowledge,* as the subtitle indicates, is a continuation of that 1973 collection of essays. Among the subjects treated are the recent blurring or mixing of genres in intellectual life, the nature of anthropological understanding (to what extent can we see "from the native's point of view"?), art and common sense as cultural systems, the ethnographic analysis of modern thought (various disciplines are really ways of being in the world), and the relation of fact and law in a comparative perspective. As might be expected, most of the pieces have appeared previously; only the last, a long, three-part essay titled "Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective," is printed here for the first time. As also might be expected, the author claims in his introduction that although the essays were prepared for various occasions and audiences they are unified by a general program. In this case the claim happens to be true. Recurring attitudes, concepts, and terms inform the essays and mark them as "interpretive anthropology" as Geertz practices it.

What is interpretive anthropology and how does it relate to local knowledge? Geertz's concept of culture is essentially a semiotic one. He has consistently defined culture with some version of this formula: "Culture is a system of meanings embodied in symbols." Both "meaning" and "symbol" are defined broadly. As he explains in the introductory essay of *The Interpretation of Cultures:*

> Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surfaces enigmatical.

He aligns himself with the symbolic action theorists and views culture as an "acted document" or "text" written in the examples of behavior. He believes the interminable debate among anthro-



pologists as to whether culture is subjective or objective is misconceived. If we view human behavior as symbolic action —action that signifies—then the debate loses sense. And in interpreting signifiers in social phenomena, the emphasis should be on particular context and specific detail, or, in other words, local knowledge. For Geertz, the interpretive study of culture is an attempt "to come to terms with the diversity of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of living them." The principle challenge is to steer between overinterpretation and underinterpretation.

Dispassion, generality, and empirical grounding have been the elusive aims of the determinative approach. To achieve such aims it has posited a radical distinction between description and evaluation. Geertz's cultural hermeneutics finds that distinction problematic. In his view, the importance of an ethnologic account lies not in the author's ability to "capture primitive facts in faraway places and carry them home like a mask or a carving" but in the degree to which he is able to interpret and clarify what he has observed. It is a process of translation, closer to "what a critic does to illumine a poem" than to "what an astronomer does to account for a star." Indeed, one of the essays in *Local Knowledge* draws an explicit parallel between what Lionel Trilling did in criticism and what Geertz does in anthropology. Both are concerned with the social context of the moral imagination. Just as Trilling, for example, "translates" the world of Jane Austen for the 20th-century reader, Geertz "translates" Balinese culture for the Western reader.

The interest in interpretation—conceiving of human behavior and its products as texts to be analyzed and explicated—touches nearly every realm of cultural study. Geertz calls attention to the frequent mixing of genres in intellectual life and claims it is producing a "refiguration of social thought." The social sciences are undergoing a "deprovincialization" that is leading them away from the models of positivistic science. "The penetration of the social sciences by the views of such philosophers as Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Gadamer, or Ricoeur, such critics as Burke, Frye, Jameson, or Fish, and such all-purpose subversives as Foucault, Habermas, Barthes, or Kuhn makes any simple return to a technological conception of those sciences highly improbable." More and more, he says, the social sciences are turning to the humanities for models and explanatory analogies. This is evidence both of the turn to interpretation and of a refiguration that is altering not only theory, method, and subject matter but also the very aims of those disciplines.

Such a shift in aims is reflected in

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Geertz's assertion that anthropological writings are fictions; "fictions, in the sense that they are 'something made,' 'something fashioned,' not that they are false, unfactual, or merely 'as if' thought experiments." Cultural analysis, he claims, is intrinsically incomplete. Interpretive anthropology is a science whose progress is marked less by perfection of consensus than by refinement of debate: "There are no conclusions to be reported; there is merely a discussion to sustain." These notions are more characteristic of the literary critic than of the scientist.

This revised style of discourse in the social sciences has important implications for the humanities. Although Geertz does not explore those implications very far, he suggests that a critical consciousness will have to develop to guide social scientists in this new direction, and the humanists may not be very well prepared for such a task. Urgently needed are the reflections of humanists on the activities of social scientists as they employ models and analogies from humanist domains. Since the imagery for those activities derives from the humanities, the humanists are connected with the argument not as "skeptical bystanders" but as "chargeable accomplices." Whether this situation will make the social sciences less scientific or humanistic study more so, Geertz does not presume to say, but he insists that the changing character of both is clear and important.

Geertz's insistent concern with local knowledge—with diversity, particulars, and specific cultural context—creates uneasiness for the Demon of the Absolute, and that is all to the good. But there is, after all, a danger of becoming lost in particulars. Knowing everything in particular, one might end by knowing nothing in particular. Geertz dismisses this fear of particularism as "a bit of academic neurosis." He insists that his approach is not an attempt to exalt diversity but rather to "take it seriously as itself an object of analytic description and interpretive reflection." All the same, one wonders in reading his essays exactly how diversity and relativity are to be counterbalanced. He speaks of a dynamic process of tacking between observation of detail and formulation of generalities, of hopping back and forth between the whole conceived through the parts and the parts conceived through the whole. But doesn't even such a fluid process need some kind of orienting principles? I suspect, as a matter of fact, that such principles are tacitly operating in Geertz's writings—certain unarticulated value assumptions that provide equilibrium in his confrontation with the "grand actuality." He ends the book with the statement that the primary question for any cultural institution anywhere is whether human beings are going to be able to continue "to imagine principled lives they can practicably lead." If we were to ask more of *Local Knowledge,* it might be to inquire about the exact nature and source of the principles. □

Notables

Tito and After

Yugoslavia is among the most exotic countries of Europe. The dominant nationality, the Serbs, had a rich and heroic past with strong links to the Byzantine Empire. Indeed, the last Emperor, whom Gibbon called the last and best of the Caesars, had a Serbian mother. After their subjugation by the Turks, the Serbs embarked upon a 500-year career of national mythmaking which finds its most recent expression in the works of Milovan Djilas, an internationally famous political theorist. Even under the communist regime established by Marshall Tito, the Serbs did not give up their sense of the past (Djilas himself was once among Tito's closest colleagues), and the literature of Yugoslavia has become one of the richest in Eastern Europe.

The latest issue of *Survey* (Autumn 1984) features a symposium on "Yugoslavia: Titoism & After," which includes articles by such prominent Yugoslav political writers as Milovan Djilas, Desimir Tochitch, and Veljko Micunovic. These contributions are particularly welcome, since Yugoslavia is a country little understood by Western journalists who typically overestimate both its economic successes and its ethnic frictions. The late Marshall Tito has consistently been given credit for engineering Yugoslavia's prosperity and for holding together the Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Albanians, and Macedonians in a fragile federation. In a remarkably useful article, Desimir Tochitch points out that Yugoslavia was propped up by foreign loans from the West and not by an economic self-management system that has never been allowed to function without government interference and corruption, and that despite their frictions, the nations which make up the 86 percent South Slavic majority do not have a history of actual warfare (none of their nationalist movements has ever called for outright independence). In other articles, Milovan Djilas provides a memoir of Tito's relations with Stalin, and Aleksa Djilas analyzes the role of the Communist Party in Yugoslav history. Under its editor, Leopold Labedz, *Survey* continues its fine tradition of providing intelligent commentary on Eastern European affairs. □

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The following is the text of Russell Kirk's address at the 1984 Ingersoll Prizes Awards Banquet.

The Literature of Order

by Russell Kirk

Nature imitates art: so Oscar Wilde instructs us. Whether or not natural sunsets imitate Turner's painted sunsets, surely human nature is developed by human arts. "Art is man's nature," in Burke's phrase: modeling ourselves upon the noble creations of the great writer and the great painter, we become fully human by emulation of the artist's vision.

Or such is the upward way. But also there exists the path to Avernus, the way of degradation. The art of decadence and nihilism, the art of meaningless violence and meaningful fraud, presents us with the image of man unregenerate and triumphant in his depravity. Many in our time are seduced into the abyss of the diabolic imagination, taking for their exemplars the creations of the writers and the artists of disorder.

In our time, the disciplines of humane letters and of scholarship are disputed in a Debatable Land by the partisans of order and the partisans of disorder. In this clash, often the enemies of the permanent things gain the advantage. Yet their victory is Pyrrhic: for in undoing order, they undo themselves. Preferring to reign in Hell rather than to serve in Heaven, they make a Waste Land, and are condemned to dwell therein. In Burke's words: "The law is broken; nature is disobeyed; and the rebellious are outlawed, cast forth, and exiled, from this world of reason, and order, and peace, and virtue, and fruitful penitence, into the antagonist world of madness, discord, vice, confusion, and unavailing sorrow."

The frontiers of that antagonistic world of the rebels against nature and art have been extended, figuratively and literally, in our day; and many innocents have fallen trophy to the enemy. The antagonist world of disorder breaks into many a public library, where masses of the latest paperbacks of salacity and violence are offered to boys and girls—at racks just within the doors. Through fanatic politics, the antagonist world lays waste order and justice and freedom: a Pol Pot, having spent sufficient years in Parisian cafés absorbing Marxist dogmata, returns to Cambodia to slaughter a third of the population of his own country. Ideas do have consequences. Somewhere in the pages of Sainte-Beuve we encounter the revolutionary playwright who gestures from his window toward the ferocious mob pouring down the boulevard: "See my pageant passing!"

Richard Weaver knew this hard truth that our bent world cringes under the blows of the literature of disorder. As he wrote in *Modern Age,* a quarter of a century ago, "The intent of the radical to defy all substance, or to press it into forms conceived in his mind alone, is . . . theologically wrong; it is an aggression by the self which outrages a deep laid order of things. And it has seeped into every department of our life."

The literary nihilism of our age has assaulted the dignity of man, the human state of being worthy. Five centuries ago, Pico della Mirandola declared that God has said to man, "We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and moulder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine."

The literary nihilists, the artists of disorder, enjoin us to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. One may discern in any day's newspaper some item that is evidence of a widespread "intellectual" hostility toward religious belief and toward true humanism. Leading book publishers puff up works of fiction meant to convince us that indeed we are but naked apes, and works of political polemics intended to repudiate our social order and bring on, at best, what Tocqueville calls "democratic despotism." Reviewers simper at the obscene and revile intemperately—or ignore altogether—books that attempt to work a renewal of mind and conscience. The oligarchs of the antagonist world, in the realm of letters, are eager to attract more dupes.

Pandering to literary and social decadence has its material rewards, even if the iron enters into the souls of such artists with an eye for the main chance. The emoluments of pornography are sufficiently obvious; few trades in our time are better paid. Ideological servility in letters also earns its ounce of gold at the devil's booth. T. S. Eliot put this urbanely in his *Criterion* review of books by Leon Trotsky and V. S. Calverton, in 1933:

> It is natural, and not necessarily convincing, to find young intellectuals in New York turning to communism, and turning their communism to literary account. The literary profession is not only, in all countries, overcrowded and underpaid (the few overpaid being chiefly persons who have outlived their influence, if they ever had any); it is embarrassed by such a number of ill-trained people doing such a number of unnecessary jobs; and writing so many unnecessary books and unnecessary reviews of books, that it has much ado to maintain its dignity as a profession at all. One is almost tempted to form the opinion that the world is at a stage at which men of letters are a superfluity. To be able therefore to envisage literature

Dr. Kirk is the 1984 recipient of The Ingersoll Foundation's Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters.

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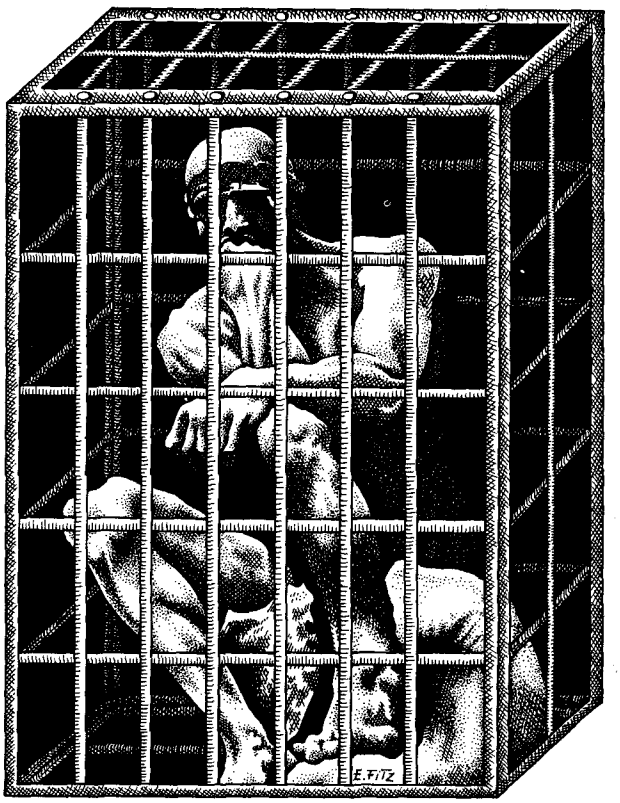
> under a new aspect, to take part in the creation of a new art and new standards of literary criticism, to be provided with a whole stock of ideas and of words, that is for a writer in such circumstances to be given a new lease on life. It is not always easy, of course, in the ebullitions of a new movement, to distinguish the man who has received the living word from the man whose access of energy is the result of being relieved of the necessity of thinking for himself. Men who have stopped thinking make a powerful force. There are obvious inducements, beside that—never wholly absent—of simple conversion, to entice the man of letters into political and social theory which he then employs to revive his sinking fires and rehabilitate his profession.

So, 50 years gone, Eliot wrote of "Marxist criticism"—a term which, when uttered a few years ago at a literary congress in Budapest, was received with roars of derisive laughter: "Marxist criticism! Marxist *criticism!*" Yet in 1984, here in America, judgment of letters and scholarship in the light of ideological prejudices remains an effective weapon in the hands of the critical Rhadamanthus of the antagonistic world. Christian belief especially is detected and denounced by that Rhadamanthus: for the ideologue recognizes in Christianity, however enfeebled today, the chief power of resistance to the assault upon the dignity of man.

Yet there endures the literature of dignity and the scholarship of wisdom. It will take better men than Trotsky and Calverton to refute Plato, Vergil, Dante, Spenser, Johnson, and Eliot. "The dead alone give us energy," says Le Bon, and those dead men of letters and learning abide with us still. So long as some young people still are introduced to the imagination of such as Walter Scott or Nathaniel Hawthorne—as I was at the age of seven—the moral imagination will be nurtured. (Our public schools, however, are more willing to present the rising generation with the dully relevant.) The principal poets of the 20th century have been defenders of the permanent things: Eliot, Yeats, Frost. Our better historians have been men of spiritual perceptions: Christopher Dawson, Martin D'Arcy, Herbert Butterfield. Our keener literary critics have set their faces against the antagonist world: Allen Tate, Donald Davidson, C. S. Lewis. Our more influential novelists have been men attached to tradition: Evelyn Waugh, William Faulkner, and Anthony Powell, honored here today. Everyone present will think of other worthy exemplars of the literature of order in the soul and order in the commonwealth; but I am not compiling a catalogue.

With the exception of Mr. Powell, I have mentioned men of learning and letters who have entered upon eternity. Permit me to add the names of senior writers and scholars in a variety of disciplines who still are with us in the flesh and are worthier of today's Weaver Award than is your servant: Eliseo Vivas, Andrew Lytle, Eric Voegelin, Malcolm Muggeridge, Gerhart Niemeyer. And, with Burke, I attest the rising generation: out of the renewed hopes of this country will emerge writers and scholars ready, in Pico's words, to "join battle as to the sound of a trumpet of war," assailing the vegetative and sensual errors of the age.

Order in society may be renewed through order in humane letters and order in scholarship, God willing. Two old friends of mine, laboring in a hostile climate of opinion and straitened in their means—T. S. Eliot and Richard Weaver—woke the imagination and the right reason of the better minds and consciences of this era. Future Ingersoll Prizes will recognize courageous and talented adherence to those enduring principles which Eliot and Weaver expressed so memorably, and which Solzhenitsyn maintains today.



I conclude, ladies and gentlemen, with a passage from a book to which I wrote the Foreword: Richard Weaver's *Visions of Order: The Cultural Crisis of Our Time,* published just 20 years ago.

> Literature is the keystone of the arch of culture. Not only is it the most various, searching, and 'complete' of the forms, but it is the form in which an intellectual culture stores the ideas from which a society derives its rhetoric of cohesion and impulsion. If this goes, we cannot be sure how much else will be allowed to remain, and the degeneration of culture is the

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(Russell Kirk, continued from page 19)

road back to brutishness.

There is always in cultural observance a little gesture of piety, a recognition that there are higher demands on man along with the lower. . . . Then there is the further consideration that a culture is a protection against fanaticism both of the political and the religious kind. If there is nothing but a vacancy between men and their political or religious ideal, the response to this may be without the rationality and grace of measure. . . . Thus art and manners are seen to have a relation to politics and religion, not teaching them in any simple or direct sense, but providing a bridge by which one is helped to pass from one kind of cognition to another. This is the highest reason of all for desiring to preserve the basis of our culture, which we have now seen to be threatened by pseudoscientific images of man.

Amen to that. Through Augustine of Hippo, the literature of order passed from the ancient world to the Christian world; and on the darkling plain of our own time of troubles, let us pray, there will stand firm men of letters and scholarship capable of expressing in ethical rhetoric those truths which seem scandalous to the nihilist and the ideologue. □

Race and Freedom

Thomas Sowell: *The Economics and Politics of Race: An International Perspective;* William Morrow; New York.

by Robert B. Eckhardt

If Valley Girls could read, Thomas Sowell's book would gag them with the facts. The author, a Chicago-educated economist now at the Hoover Institution, presents his readers with a carefully researched book that is replete with facts about economics, politics, and race. He then goes on to show how the forces emanating from all of these realms interact to shape a reality which is as far from the platitudinous thinking of limousine liberals as the United States is from the shores of many of the world's lands that have contributed migrants to our richly diverse population.

Indicative of Sowell's directness is his contention early on that there is no workable biological definition of race. This leads to a realization that most people do not grasp: that race is only incidentally or tangentially a biological phenomenon, and is far more enlighteningly conceived of as a sociological entity with profound economic as well as political implications. Sowell argues this point admirably from a theoretical standpoint in his first chapter.

My wife and I have four children, two sons and two daughters. According to our nomenclature the pairs are, respectively, homemade (the boys) and mail-order (the girls, sisters, having been adopted together from Korea at ages three and five years). Physically and physiologically the girls are manifestly Asian, and anyone with sufficient experience would be able to place their origins in the northern part of the continent. They have straight dark hair, broad faces, eyes with marked epicanthic folds, snub noses, limbs short in relation to their sturdy trunks, and an amazing tolerance for cold weather. While biologically eastern, however, the girls are culturally western. Here for nearly a decade, they wear the teenage uniform of the day (typically jeans and some variety of striped pullover shirt), discuss sports with (to me) bewildering avidity, opine unabashedly that boys of Asian ancestry are "funny-looking," and believe that rice—while suitable for throwing, dry, at newlyweds—is not really fit for human consumption. Like their brothers, the girls speak colloquial American English, have heard and spoken Spanish in highland Peru during trips for parental field research, and have studied enough Hebrew for the 13-year-old to have become Bat Mitzvah.

One of Thomas Sowell's major points is that in an array of traits the biological features are less relevant to success in life than the cultural ones. He and I, however much we may agree with each other in this belief, are nevertheless at variance with the law of the land as made by the courts. Complications such as the ones that exist in my own family, and which no doubt crop up in a good many American households these days, have no effect on the pop biology racial classifications that are created by social engineers for purposes of political expediency.

A prime example of one such arbitrary taxonomic system is that used in the most recent U.S. census. If you recall, our choices were white; black; American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut; Asian/Pacific Islander; Spanish origin. No one who made up such a classification could be accused of having wasted much time studying human biology, genetics, history, or even introductory logic. Does being of Spanish origin, for example, bar one from having a skin color, the presumable basis for the categories black and white? What cause could there possibly be for separating the three Asian-derived populations in the third category from their Asian parent stock? Why are the Asians other than those that beat the Europeans and Africans to these shores grouped together with the even later arrivals from the Pacific Islands—an incredibly heterogeneous sample that gathers in not only the Hawaiians and Samoans but also the black-skinned Melanesians and even the Pitcairn Islanders, exotic hybrid descendants of the British

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Bounty mutineers and their Tahitian consorts? Welcome to the politics of race.

In the U.S. census system now mandated by law, I presumably would be pigeonholed into the white group, though I try not to think in terms of skin colors anyway (partly because mine is really less white than pink, a color whose political associations I don't particularly like). The more archaic label "choleric" comes a good bit closer to my pigmentation as well as temperament, but it isn't listed on the census form. My ancestors weren't Caucasian, either—not by a distance of some 2000 miles as the crow flies. I really think of myself as an American, though if it is necessary to deal with origins, my background is broadly northwest European.

My wife, of Ashkenazi Jewish extraction, also would be classed in the white category by the mandated guidelines, although the most authoritative recent work on the subject of her ancestry (*The Genetics of the Jews* by A. E. Mourant and his colleagues, 1978) demonstrates clearly that nearly all Jewish communities show a proportion of African Negroid marker genes (chiefly for blood groups and other similarly invisible traits) substantial enough to imply a black African admixture in the range of five to ten percent. Were this same fraction represented in visible physical features there's little doubt that at some times and places in the United States it would have sufficed for placement in the black category instead. Sowell himself points out that tens of millions of U.S. whites (thus something over 10 percent of the general U.S. population) have at least one black ancestor, by which I suspect he means one acquired in the relatively recent historical past, as from intermarriage with blacks brought to the United States as slaves.

There is a potential substitute for all of this unnecessary genetic gerrymandering that shows up in the national census and increasingly in other realms of our society. That is to treat every individual as an individual, and to form one's opinion on the basis of that person's behavior, talents, and contributions. This is the tradition in which I was raised, and it is the one I expect I shall die believing. It has ethical foundations, but of at least as much importance here, this individual-oriented strategy is entirely in keeping with what we know of the biological basis of human variation. Both skin color (perhaps the most common touchstone of racial stereotypes) and intelligence quotient (a poorly understood but commonly used proxy for human ability) are quantitative traits. Variation in each of these characteristics is known to be influenced by myriad genetic and environmental factors. To the best of our very considerable knowledge, the genetic factors are inherited independently of each other.

In quantitative traits, human populations may differ on the average, but such differences are quite commonly small in proportion to the differences within each group. To use one of the dubious but accepted racial labels, socially defined whites include people as light-skinned as Swedes and other northern Europeans, to some inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent who are as heavily pigmented as many African blacks. Again, among socially defined blacks in the United States we find some individuals who are lighter in skin color than many socially defined whites of Mediterranean European ancestry, and others who are as dark-skinned as the African progenitors who contributed about seven out of every ten ancestors to this subpopulation of our country. With regard to I.Q., there are again intergroup differences. However, the average differences are so slight that the overlap between the two groups is about 95 percent, and once again the between-group differences are but a small fraction of the range within any human group. For all of these reasons, attempting to prejudge a person's abilities on the basis of skin color is absurd from a theoretical biological standpoint.

Though he sees the bioillogicality (if I may be neologistic) of this position, Sowell nevertheless realizes that people in general routinely use biological clues to identify the bearers of different social and cultural traditions.

> Race may have no intrinsic significance, and yet be associated historically with vast cultural differences that are very consequential for economic performance, physical health, personal safety, and political stability —regardless of whether racism is a major element in people's subjective attitudes.

Much of *The Economics and Politics of Race* is devoted to an enumeration of these consequential differences among the traditions and attainments of various populations, and the historical backgrounds which led to the disparities in the resultant human capital. Sowell does not represent cultures as utterly impervious to change, but perhaps his most directly pragmatic insight is that the time horizons over which cultural evolution occurs differ greatly from group to group, from time to time, and from place to place—but that this change is almost invariably slower than the time horizon that is politically relevant to elected officials. Consequently, the short-term political fixes that are employed almost always impose costs that are as unpredictable as they are inequitable and counterproductive. Peter may be robbed to pay Paul, but thanks to the magic of political accounting techniques, Paul never realizes more than a fraction of what Peter was deprived.

Two centuries ago Adam Smith wrote in his *Wealth of Nations* that:

> The real price of everything, what everything really costs to the man who wants to acquire it, is the toil and trouble of acquiring it.

To this we might add, "As is the price, so is the value." To Thomas Sowell goes the credit for telling us how and why this is so, and for recounting his story with wit and style. □

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COMMENDABLES

Holy Water for the Rich

Bernard Murchland: ***The Dream of Christian Socialism;*** American Enterprise Institute; Washington, D.C.

by Richard A. Cooper

Christianity and socialism exert tremendous influence in our world. Not surprisingly, some people have sought to harness these powerful forces together in one unified engine of change. Today, we hear talk of a "Christian social conscience" and "liberation theology." Bernard Murchland's examination of the European origins of Christian Socialism is surprisingly relevant for contemporary observers.

How did Christian Socialists view themselves? Their cardinal tenet is the identification of "socialism" (very loosely defined) with the message of Jesus Christ, especially the Sermon on the Mount. In the words of the Anglican theologian Frederick Denison Maurice, "I seriously believe that Christianity is the only foundation of Socialism, and that a true Socialism is the necessary result of a sound Christianity."

Common to Christian Socialists was a romantic rejection of industrialism, rationalism, and capitalism as anti-Christian. Against the modern world, Christian Socialists praised the collectivist order of the Middle Ages as one which offered security, personal relations, and a spiritual life in the service of God. Christian Socialists scorned individualism as idolatrous.

Murchland demonstrates that Christian Socialism was essentially a middle-class and aristocratic movement, though "Christian labor unions" grew out of it. This fact did not escape Marx's notice and scorn. He observed, "Christian socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart-burnings of the aristocrat."

Towards the end of the 19th century, Christian Socialism did exert some influence in Germany, Austria, and Italy, upon intellectuals and through Christian labor unions on the political scene. American "Progressivism" drew some inspiration from German and English sources under the name of the "social gospel." Economist Richard T. Ely was a devout Protestant layman, mixing collectivism with evangelical fervor.

Christian Socialism stressed "association" and "community," endowing these terms with mystical and suprarational characteristics of goodness, above comprehension and beyond dispute. These ideas owed a great deal to Hegel, whose statist doctrines received wide support in authoritarian Imperial Germany.

Like all collectivisms, Christian Socialism subordinated the individual to the interests of a real or imagined "whole." Strangely, Murchland takes no notice of the strong linkage between Christian Socialism and anti-Semitism exemplified by Christian Socialist Karl Lueger, mayor of Vienna. Nor does Murchland investigate the tendency towards nationalism of some Christian Socialists. I suggest that the driving force behind Christian Socialist anti-Semitism was the hatred of money, a subject thoroughly investigated by Georg Simmel and S. Herbert Frankel.

In practice, Christian Socialism proved to be a party label for interventionism, and it is subject to the same critique of interventionism leveled by Ludwig von Mises: It distorts the dynamic process of the market to the detriment of consumers. □

Shaving the Monkey

Stephen R. L. Clark: ***The Nature of the Beast: Are Animals Moral?;*** Oxford University Press; New York.

"Man," Mark Twain once declared, "is a species somewhere between the angels and the French." Our place in nature was a subject for discussion long before Darwin, although evolutionists often try to give the impression that mankind had to wait for a Victorian biologist to reveal the fact of our animal nature. In fact, Linnaeus (following a tradition as old as Aristotle) located man squarely at the apex of his *scala naturae,* just one step above the apes. The general opinion of philosophers—Stoic, Aristotelian, Thomist—was that man was a natural creature, an animal, who had been specially endowed with the gifts of reason and moral conscience. The great question has always been: how wide is the gulf which separates man from his nearest cousins and, therefore, from the rest of the animal kingdom? Two extreme positions are possible: the Cartesian view, that everything distinctly human lies in the soul, that animals are mere animated machines; and the naturalist view, that man is nothing more than an animal, an ape that has happened to evolve a rather large brain.

The political alignments on this question are not always predictable. Fundamentalist Christians are in the Cartesian camp and argue that it is fruitless to discuss man's mammalian heritage: our species is a special creation designed for a particular purpose. The fundamentalists are reinforced by social scientists, usually non-Christian leftists, who maintain that culture and society are unique to man; comparisons with other species can only be misleading. On the other hand, political conservatives (often Christians in their private lives) are naturally inclined to find their views ratified in the natural order of things. The strangest set of contradictions is presented by Stephen Clark: a socialist and feminist of some sort, an Aristotelian and a theist, he adopts the typically English *via media* (if Clark is a Scot, I beg his forgiveness): human nature is a development—cultural, intellectual, and moral—of instinctual patterns that show up in other mammals:

> I make no secret that my own vote falls with those who would deny a radical division between 'men' and 'beasts.' . . . The almost universal judgment of mankind has been that animals do indeed show love, devotion, righteous anger, shame, that they are governed in part by laws, instinctive and learned. It is natural law that parents care for their children, spare their defeated clan-mates . . . . Perhaps the roots of ethical concern were here, and from such natural concern for our defenseless young, or unwillingness to savage our fellows, the moral systems of mankind were raised.

Clark explores the natural basis for human intelligence, free will, personal identity, and ethics. As a philosopher—do not be misled by the subject, Clark is

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the real thing—he frames his subject between an analysis of underlying theories and assumptions and a discussion of the social and political consequences. At his best, Clark is a brilliant philosopher of science, a theoretical anthropologist. Unfortunately, he is all too often a victim to his prejudices: animal rights, socialism, and feminism. His most obsessive hobbyhorse is the morality of animals. It is possible to agree with him that natural law is really natural or that animals should not be subjected to painful and often silly experiments without at the same time putting on the rose-colored glasses of the animal moralist. Few of us are inclined to accept the moral freedom of wolves or the ability of chimpanzees to engage in abstract thought.

As a socialist, Clark feels compelled to belittle his natural allies, ethologists and sociobiologists, because their conclusions are often used to reinforce the right. In fact, many of Clark's most sensible points have already been made by E. O. Wilson or Richard Dawkins, whose views and arguments he reduces to caricatures. The most peculiar part of this ideologizing is that Clark is not a very good socialist, much less a doctrinaire Marxist. He concedes, as part of human nature, some respect for private property and the need to show deference to superiors. In fact, his utopian socialist vision brings him much closer to the contributors of *I'll Take My Stand* than to the editors of *The Nation*—more Chesterton than Tony Benn to use a British analogy.

Clark's most peculiar perversion is his announced feminism. His repeated condemnations of "patriarchalism" as the source of human evil is all the more curious because he never defines what he means by patriarchy and never confronts the anthropological or biological evidence for the universal pattern of male dominance. But if all these irrational prejudices are stripped

away, we are left with a brilliant and systematic exploration of what it means to be a human animal. Unlike so many animal rights people, Clark does not write out of contempt for his own species. It would be more fair to say that his affections spill over and trickle down the steps of nature's ladder.

What are we, then, "slaves of God or naked apes"? Clark's answer is cautious:

> My own belief is that we are mammals, and part of the flock of God: my anthropology has its roots in both biology and religion. . . . Affection towards clanmates, love of children, deference to authority, disinclination to kill those who have reminded us of common humanity, even some respect for property: these features of human life do not, it seems, stem from our intellectual gifts.

The implications for human social life are obvious. The "natural affections" are at the root of our social life. If we are sociable by nature, then are we not also—in Aristotle's phrase—political animals—creatures programmed to live in small-scale communities which are the family writ large? Clark has reservations about the male-dominated Greek *polis* of Aristotelian philosophy, but he shares with the Greek a vision of "a form of society that stretches further even than an extended family." Such a conception of society sheds light on the old problem of social control. If old-fashioned liberals and libertarians want to reduce the state to a set of free individualists, how can they ensure that their children will be raised to prefer freedom? How, that is, can they maintain their freedom without imposing authority? Clark suggests that only a recovery of "mutual affections" in small communities can guarantee the survival of free society:

> Aristotelian political theory, suitably informed by ethological data concerning the likely bases of ethical sentiment, may offer us a route between the advocates of State power in its modern form and individualistic libertarians.

An Aristotelian revival of this sort might succeed in creating an ideal materialist state but no Aristotelian—and certainly no Christian—can rest content. The good city exists for more than material well-being: It aims at the happiness of good men. For a good man to be happy, his life must be directed toward the good-in-itself, toward transcendence. In the end, the crack between man and nature must be broadened by the recognition of God, who compels us—and us alone—to judge our natural sentiments by a higher law. (TF) □

Crows on the Barn Roof

Janet Beeler Shaw: *Some of the Things I Did Not Do;* University of Illinois Press; Urbana and Chicago.

The gulf between readable popular fiction and unreadable serious fiction has widened (and deepened) in recent years, to an almost uncrossable chasm. Writers trying to bridge the abyss from either direction have a habit of sinking out of sight. For all his many virtues, James Jones could not be taken seriously by the critics—he was just too damn entertaining—while Gore Vidal's efforts to be "experimental" have only succeeded in alienating his considerable Book-of-the-Month Club readership. However, one promising sign is the emergence of Janet Beeler Shaw as a major proposition in American short fiction. Shaw's stories are as readable as a good mystery, but they are also a good deal more serious than most of what passes for important writing.

The stories in Shaw's first collection are a series of glimpses into the lives of ordinary people. Her characters are neither desperate loners nor bored housewives. They are not, thank heavens, writers and artists. Her world is inhabited by a young unwed mother who calls Dial-a-Prayer just to hear the voice of the priest she has fallen in love with, a divorced father who takes his son hiking in the mountains, a young man who finds himself committed—almost against his will—to marrying an anorexic. Although each of the tales is a study in crisis, they are brought off with a poise and sense of restraint which avoids the slightest hint of melodrama.

The most striking feature of this collection is the variety of characters. Each one is so well-conceived, so clearly sketched that the reader is convinced that Shaw is writing disguised autobiography. Her people seem to come in unmatched pairs, like the simple college jock and his expressive and arty wife who say things like, "I love the way you're sharing yourself with me." When

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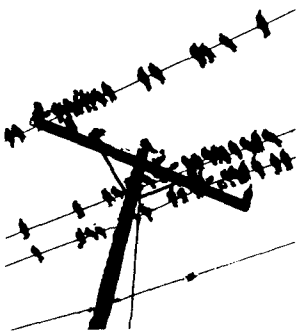
his wife discovers that he is turning into a Peeping Tom, his response is not shame but an outraged accusation: "What about my privacy?" Her answer, "I didn't mean from me!" is the flashpoint of their brief marriage. The title story is the most explicitly philosophical and seems to approach the metaphysical quality of Flannery O'Connor. In a rare fit of lucidity, the schizophrenic mother of a disabled vet "poured gasoline



over herself and burned herself to death in the hog barn." In her note, she tells her son that she is tired of waiting for the angels to come:

> I thought I saw some
> today, but no, just crows
> on the barn roof

—a sentence which could be taken as the epitaph not only of one unhappy woman (or even of Shaw's characters) but of a great many people who cannot seem to make any sense out of a confused America. Unlike O'Connor, Janet Shaw does not see angels, even when they might be real. But it is not the artist's function to offer philosophical solutions or a guide for the perplexed. What he can do—and Shaw does it admirably—is to stay submerged long enough in contemporary experience to see such visions as only drowning men are privileged to see. In Shaw's case, a whole generation of American lives seems to have passed before her eyes. □

Great Saladin

P. H. Newby: *Saladin in His Time;* Faber and Faber; London.

There are two views of Saladin in the Christian world. In his lifetime he was regarded as the courtly and virtuous Saracen, the noble enemy of an equally noble *Couer de Lion.* Dante treated him kindly in the *Commedia* and Kaiser Wilhelm II had his tomb in Damascus refurbished. Most of us became acquainted with this model of pious chivalry in Scott's *The Talisman.* But modern historians have not been so kind. Saladin made a show of piety and proselyted his enemies, but, they point out, he drank wine and failed to make the obligatory *hajj* to Mecca. While the crusaders claimed to admire his chivalry, Saladin rose to power by pushing aside the family of his benefactor, Nur-al-Din, and from time to time he showed himself capable of acts of violent retribution. In a brief but forceful account, P. H. Newby has given us a portrait which does include the warts but does not overlook the nobility of the entire countenance. One incident can serve to illustrate the Saracen's character and the difficulties he faced. At the capture of Jaffa (1192), his Kurdish compatriots began looting the city—contrary to orders. Saladin succeeded in inducing his Egyptian *mamluks* to attack the Kurds and compel them to restore their loot. On the other side King Richard, with only 3,000 men against 60,000 Moslems, managed to attack and retake the city the next day. Predictably, Scott turns out to be more accurate than the historians. As Aristotle observed, fiction is more philosophical than history, and a major premise of most fiction is the influence of character upon event.

The fate of empires can sometimes turn on the career of a single man. During Saladin's lifetime, the world of Islam was as divided as it is today. The Caliph in Bagdad was becoming less of a figurehead, partially at the expense of the Turkish Sultans, and Syrians, Kurds, Egyptians, and Turks seemed unable to mount a united opposition against the Franks. Saladin was instrumental in reviving a Moslem commitment to recover the holy places—especially Jerusalem—and expel the Europeans. The Third Crusade, largely because of the personal vigor and military genius of England's Richard, did pose a serious threat to Saladin's strategy. Most of his emirs turned against him and openly refused to prosecute the war. But Richard sailed for England and a truce of three years and eight months was declared. The Kurdish Sultan died a year later, leaving the empire he had created to his sons and brothers, whose family squabbles led to its demise. Even Jerusalem was retaken for a time but the days of Outremer were numbered. The Third Crusade had been the last real chance for a Latin empire in the East.

One small complaint might be made about Newby's little book. Its strongest virtue is the Western scholar's willingness to look at things from the perspective of Islam. But this virtue might also be taken as a sign of despair, as if the author could only find his heroes in an alien world. There is, after all, more than one way of going native. The crusaders, like Dante and Scott, were generous enough to admire the virtues of their enemy. They were not, however, converted by them. □

In Focus

A Tale of Modern Times

William Dear: *The Dungeon Master: The Disappearance of James Dallas Egbert III;* Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

Dallas Egbert was a genius. At the age of 13 he entered Michigan State University to study computer science. MSU assured the Egberts that the university would take special care of the brilliant but remarkably immature student. Two years later he disappeared. William Dear, the Texas PI hired to find him, lost no time in discovering how well MSU had protected their young charge. Little Dallas had spent his college years cooking up angel dust in his dorm room and taking an active part in the homosexual community of East Lansing. His most strenuous intellectual pastime was playing Dungeons & Dragons—not just in his head, but in the eight-mile maze of steam tunnels under the MSU campus.

Dear's investigations were sometimes bizarre. In order to get inside the boy's head, he spent time learning to play Dungeons & Dragons. He even lay down in front of an oncoming train (another one of Dallas's amusements). Unfortunately, the engine had a cowcatcher attached, and the PI had to run for his life. More productively, Dear authorized a homosexual investigator to start pressuring the local gay community just to see what would pop (Philip Marlowe would have been proud). Eventually Dear retrieved the boy from an oil-field town in

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Louisiana. His story, when he finally gave it to the detective, was as strange as anything Dear had imagined. Driven to despair by the obvious pressures of his fantastic life—pressures which were increased by a domineering and demanding mother—he took refuge in the steam tunnels and swallowed what he hoped was a lethal dose of quaaludes. When he woke up to discover yet another personal failure, he went for help to an older homosexual, who first befriended him and then exploited him with a series of "friends." Eventually the gays got scared, probably as a result of Dear's pressuring, and sent the boy to Louisiana, perhaps intending to have him killed in a more convenient location. As Dear closed in, they changed their mind and told the boy to telephone the detective. Dallas's recovery is not the usual happy ending of fairy tales. His relations with his family improved for a while but not enough to stave off chronic depression. One year and a day after his disappearance, he blew his brains out with a .25 automatic.

William Dear is no writer—his style alone acquits him of that charge—but he has put together a compelling narrative of modern times. The casual and indirect manner of his storytelling gives the reader an occasional frightening glimpse into the unreal world of the college campus. Students would not come forward with information. The faculty refused to talk. The Gay Rights organization was only interested in protecting its rear. Nobody, it seemed, cared one way or another about the 16-year-old boy who had lost himself in the fantasy world of sci fi, Tolkien clubs, and game fantasies. The kids who knew him best were too wrapped up in their private worlds of games, drugs, and illusions.

What was the role of MSU in all this? If Dear is right, they deliber-

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ately misled Dallas's parents about the life the boy was leading. So far from providing supervision, the university authorities had no way of knowing from one day to the next if the kid was even in East Lansing (often he wasn't). They took five days to notify the parents of his disappearance, and Dear was in East Lansing for a week before they allowed him to explore the tunnels. Meantime, "somebody" complained to the Michigan State Police that Dear was not properly licensed in the state—anything, it seems, rather than help uncover a potentially damaging scandal.

It is difficult to say what Dallas Egbert might have made of his 180+ IQ if he had been allowed to lead a more normal life, or if he had been sent to a responsible liberal arts college instead of to the nightmare campus of what Russell Kirk has taught us to call Behemoth U. □

Ugly Little Facts

Anthony T. Bouscaren: *Soviet Offense: U.S. Defense;* The Foundations Press; Notre Dame, IN.

Adam M. Garfinkle: *The Politics of the Nuclear Freeze;* Foreign Policy Research Institute; Philadelphia.

The history of science, Albert Einstein once observed, is that of beautiful theories slaughtered by ugly little facts. The history of the nuclear freeze movement is that of a beautiful theory impervious to facts of every sort. The gossamer theory, of course, is that if the U.S. stops producing nuclear arms, the Soviets will do likewise, and global peace will be the eventual result. The unpleasant facts will not support this fantasy. In his short study *Soviet Offense: U.S. Defense,* Anthony Bouscaren carefully documents the unrelenting Soviet quest for nuclear and conventional superiority during a 15-year period in which the U.S. *did* freeze its nuclear arsenal and dramatically reduced its conventional forces. The sinister implications of the continuing Soviet buildup that Bouscaren traces should be evident to all but leftist ideologues and the "invincibly ignorant." Professor Bouscaren briefly discusses the combination of Western irrationalism and Soviet manipulation which has created the freeze movement, but Adam Garfinkle offers a much more comprehensive treatment of the movement in his *Politics of the Nuclear Freeze.* Intelligent and carefully nuanced, Garfinkle's analysis explodes "the illusions of certainty of freeze advocates." Of the nuclear dilemma, Garfinkle writes, "Ambiguous solutions to problems shrouded in uncertainty are much to be preferred to those that are clearcut and wrong." Lovers of beautiful theories will not care for Garfinkle's book; respecters of ugly facts will find it invaluable. □

The Sunset King

Olivier Bernier: *Louis the Beloved: The Life of Louis XV;* Doubleday; Garden City, New York.

Louis XV became King of France at the age of five. For the rest of his life he was to be courted, tickled, and used by a series of tutors, mistresses (declared and undeclared), and ministers. His long reign (1715-74) is commonly credited with bringing on the Revolution. The list of charges ordinarily leveled against the amiable monarch include: court extravagance, unsuccessful foreign policy, the indulgence of his mistresses' whims, the isolation of the court from the exigencies of the real world. Bernier makes a reasonable case for the King: his worst problems were inherited and he did the best with what he had. By the end of his life, he could congratulate himself on the peace and prosperity which France enjoyed. No foreign army had invaded French soil (Canada was lost, but no one seemed to care about "a few acres of snow"); the pernicious power of the *Parlement de Paris* had been broken (a revived *parlement* helped bring on the crisis which led to the unfortunate events of 1789); above all, France was looked up to as the intellectual and artistic center of the world. When men like Talleyrand sighed for the lost glories of the *ancien régime,* they were paying a justified (if implicit) tribute to *Louis le bien-aimé.*

It *is* hard not to sympathize with Louis XV. It is equally hard to forget that only 15 years after his death Europe witnessed the implosion of Old France and the unleashing of a revolutionary fury which was to infect the entire world. Even Bernier concedes that the King was too complacent in allowing his power to be misused by aristocratic flunkies. On rare occasions he did manage to assert himself, but his exertions had no enduring effects. Bernier's extravagant praise of Louis is something like the conservative rediscovery of the Eisenhower years. Both regimes showed a bright face to the world: peace abroad, tranquility at home; Louis was well beloved; we all liked Ike. Less noticeable but more significant in the long run were the forces of social and intellectual discontent which overflowed into rebellion. □

WASTE OF MONEY

Lucrative Lying

John Barth: *The Friday Book: Essays and Other Nonfiction;* G. P. Putnam's Sons; New York.

"For the writer intent on truth," Solzhenitsyn observes, "life never was, never is (and never will be!) easy: his like have suffered every imaginable harassment—defamation, duels, a shattered family life, financial ruin or lifelong unrelieved poverty, the madhouse, jail." Things are quite different for John Barth, the prominent "post-modernist" writer who calls himself a "professional liar." Over the past two and a half decades, Barth's lying has brought him honorary degrees, invitations to symposia, a cushy creative-writing professorship at Johns Hopkins.

All meaning for Barth is simply an imaginative construct with no absolute ontological grounding. Since the real world of fact is "devoid of ultimate meaning," the fictionist must repudiate any sense of mimesis in his art, as he creates, *ex nihilo,* "not a view of the cosmos, but a cosmos itself." At bottom, Barth concedes, his cosmos is a lie, but "*my* lies, at least, will be of professional caliber." For most of Barth's rewarding career this has meant creating lies that are "technically up-to-date," with all the geegaws, anagrams, surrealism, leftist rant, cute punctuation, and pornography demanded by the fashionable avant-garde. However, not long ago Barth allowed as how, now that the "rigidities" of "bourgeois realism" had been broken up, perhaps post-modernism could reclaim some of its conventions. That is to say, now that modernism has corroded away all of the cognitive signifi-

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cance of traditional narration and made storytelling utterly hollow, *now* its tropes are fit vehicles for liars like himself.

In this collection of essays and speeches, Barth offers us some of his nonfictional lies, though what the distinction between fiction and nonfiction is for a professional liar is difficult to say. Certainly, Barth's calls for nationalizing major industries, his paeans to the campus madness of the 60's, and all of his other "stock-liberal sentiments" (as he calls them) would fit nicely in some fantasy novel. Barth did not have to tell us that he dropped out of graduate school because he had little "ability for abstract thinking and rigorous critical analysis" and was therefore "out of [his] intellectual depth." Yet he has never let his intellectual limitations restrain his ambitions. His aim as a novelist is to create a fictional-world "more orderly, meaningful, beautiful, and interesting than the one God turned out," and he announces that if he were God he would startle and befuddle "my theologians" with a *"Boo!"*

If Barth can turn himself into god on *Friday,* we hope he takes the weekend off. □

That Old Magic

Nicholas Von Hoffman: *Organized Crimes;* Harper & Row; New York.

A boring book on a worn-out theme (which has been exploited to exhaustion by countless books and movies) ineptly written by a singularly untalented writer. Ooops, the writer is one Von Hoffman, the chic radical with a German pseudoaristocratic prefix, a fixture in "progressive" journalism—in a phrase: the leftist Mr. Right. □

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SCREEN

Saccharin Sobs

***Places in the Heart*; Written and Directed by Robert Benton; Tri-Star Pictures.**

by Stephen Macaulay

Robert Benton is the man behind *Still of the Night* and *Kramer vs. Kramer. Places in the Heart,* his latest film, is set in a small Texas town during the Depression. The subject—like *Kramer vs. Kramer*—is separation, but this time it is a wife left alone with the kids, after her husband catches a bullet in his chest in the opening scenes.

At one point, a blind man whom the widow must take in as a boarder in her efforts to stave off foreclosure (naturally) says, "I don't need your help, and I don't need you to feel sorry for me." Yet *Places in the Heart* seems designed to make us feel sorry for virtually every character in it. It does not succeed. Partly, the problem lies in the blatant symbolism. The film's language is binary. Something is good (plus) or bad (minus). Benton merely manipulates the signs: the minus of the husband's death is canceled by the plus of the wife's tenacity. The cotton picking in the hot sun, which is based on commercials for headache remedies and sunburn ointments, is balanced by the mortgage-paying crop. By the end of the film, the positives and the negatives have canceled each other out, leaving the director only one possible escape: a pointless happy ending. So he brings the dead back to life and destroys whatever realism the film had. □

By His Own Lights

Few moviegoers pay much attention to the cinematography—the subject of *A Man With a Camera* by Nestor Almendros (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; New York). Almendros has worked with leading European directors including Rohmer and Truffaut; his work with Jack Nicholson (*Goin' South*), Terrence Malick (*Days of Heaven*), and Alan Pakula (*Sophie's Choice*) is probably more familiar to—but unnoticed by—most Americans. Almendros has worked with Robert Benton on three films: *Kramer vs. Kramer, Still of the Night,* and *Places in the Heart.*

The lighting and the texture that Almendros produces on the screen are more evocative of days past than the costumes, hairstyles, antique autos, and architecture.

Although Almendros got his professional start with the French New Wave (at its trailing edge), he is less avant-garde than he is classical. Consider: "Since I lack imagination, I seek inspiration in nature, which offers me an infinite variety of forms"; and "the main qualities a director of photography needs are plastic sensitivity and a solid cultural background"; and "the world around us today is trivial at best, antiaesthetic at worst." □

LIBERAL CULTURE

Welcome Back, Papandreou

Greek Prime Minister Papandreou, who once joined the rest of the world in praising Solidarity, has now come to his senses. Speaking to reporters in late October, the former radical American college professor complained that the U.S. was seeking to destabilize the Eastern Bloc by supporting the outlawed trade movement. Solidarity had a promising beginning, but:

> For reasons that I cannot judge or know, the pace of the confrontation proceeded so rapidly as to create the great showdown. Movements that are revolutionary, that aim for change of great scope, should know when to do what. If the progressive, radical movements are not in a position to operate within the existing framework of historical possibilities, then they become negative and dangerous. . . . Unfortunately, that is my opinion of Solidarity. . . . Jaruzelski is a patriot who within the historical framework at his and at Poland's disposal is promoting . . . a change . . . that will gain ground step by step if it is not sabotaged from any quarter.

After a brief period of confusion in which Professor Papandreou considered Solidarity the biggest thing since the October Revolution, he has lately come round to realizing that Poland is actually being repressed by the U.S. State Department and not the Red Army. Oddly enough, Polish government officials are taking the same line on the murder of Father Popieluszko (the most prominent in a series of disappearing dissidents): It is not the fault of the government, which hired the security police and which benefited most; it was the CIA. The people of Greece should be interested in their Prime Minister's concept of "promoting . . . change," and it ought to make his former colleagues rejoice at the return of the prodigal professor. □

Truffaut

We are aggrieved by Francois Truffaut's passing at a mercilessly premature age. With him goes to the grave one of the most precious literary and artistic schools, French to the core, of viewing man and woman in the light of their frailties, their sweet, shameful secrets, their fleeting sins and minor virtues. It is a tradition of warm skepticism, humane maliciousness, sentimental irony. It assesses human perfectability with a sorrowful but mocking *clin d'oeil.* Its superb practitioners in culture range

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from Molière through Abbé Prévost to Alphonse Daudet on the right, Anatole France on the left, Jean Renoir and Marcel Carue in the movies, and—perhaps the last of them—Truffaut. In postmodern Hollywood, Cinecitta, Paris, and Munich, where the current "artistes" sell spasmatic amoebas, moronic butchers, and computerized fornicators as subjects of cinematic "studies," Truffaut's death signals the cruel demise of the remnants of humanness in a medium that chose to produce subhumans. But, we believe, his legacy will serve as a manifesto when the time of reckoning for the Huns that ravage culture finally arrives. □

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

Idealogues in Search of a Faith

by Louis Dupré

I was distressed to read about myself in Lee Congdon's review of my book *Marx's Social Critique of Culture:* "He is typical too in his substitution of secular utopianism for Christian hope" (*CC,* October 1984, p. 7). My work intends to show the ultimate failure of Marx's theory of culture and to be a decisive critique of its secular utopianism. Belloc's claim with which Mr. Congdon starts his review—the West must return to Christianity if it is to survive as a civilization—runs as a theme through virtually all my writings. My latest book and the one immediately preceding the Marx critique (*The Deeper Life* [1981], *The Common Life* [1984]) both deal with Christian mysticism and were written from precisely this point of view. I am decidedly not "an ideologue in search of a faith": I already have a faith, and it is not Marxist in any form.

Mr. Congdon's concern with his version of "Christian hope" makes him lose sight of Christian charity. The innuendo about Yale University Press's uncritically receptive attitude toward Yale faculty is an undeserved slur. If your reviewer had informed himself about YUP policy, he would have found this to be untrue. It is a critic's duty to point out what he perceives as defects; it is his right to express disagreements of any kind; but it is his obligation to maintain minimal standards of fairness, especially with respect to factual reporting. Such is particularly the case if he writes in defense of Christian values. □

Louis Dupré is T. L. Riggs professor of Roman Catholic Studies at Yale University.

Prof. Congdon Replies

I regret very much any distress I may have caused Professor Dupré. All the more so in view of his manifestly sincere protestation that elsewhere he has argued vigorously for a revitalization of Christian civilization. That being said, I think he would agree that my lack of familiarity with his work as a whole does not constitute proof of any dereliction of duty. My responsibility was to read and to offer a reasoned consideration of one book—*Marx's Social Critique of Culture.* Having reread my essay, I do not think that anything I wrote contradicts Professor Dupré's insistence that he intended to show the ultimate failure of Marx's theory. On the contrary, after pointing out that he was "too intelligent and scrupulous to ignore Marx's manifest lapses and contradictions," I went on to identify three of his specific criticisms.

Professor Dupré and I do differ, however, with respect to what he describes as his "decisive critique" of secular utopianism. This is not, in my judgment, a fair description of his book's concluding pages (287-88). Having criticized Marx's theory, he felt "compelled to write a final word in defense of the vision behind it," the vision, that is, of a "reintegration of all human activity." That vision may well be utopian, "but then, we may wonder whether Marx himself has not truncated his own theory by prematurely dismissing the utopian element which it unquestionably contains and which continues to give it its greatest appeal." The "idea of a fully integrated culture, however utopian it must still appear to us today, deserves serious consideration, independent of the distorting context in which Marx conceived it." I find nothing in all this concerning Christian hope, however one might elect to characterize it; nor am I able to see how these declarations add up to a *critique* of secular utopianism.

I should like, finally, to say that the title of my essay was not of my choosing; I had suggested to the editors "Marxism and the *Clercs.*" □

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The American Proscenium

French Proscenium

William Styron was recently honored by the French government, which made him a Commander of Arts and Letters. In accepting the award, Styron remarked, "Vive la France, Vive l'Amerique and all good things." Styron may not have a very strong grasp of French, but he loves the country: "I feel particularly good here, and they seem to like me." 1984 is Styron's year for picking up awards. He was also fêted at the Connecticut Arts Award Gala at which he described himself as a "one-time Southern boy." Styron is particularly liked by President Mitterrand's Culture Minister, Jack Lang, the epitome of *gauchiste* 60's radicalism in France. Now that he's given up on Danny the Red, Lang has adopted Mr. Styron as his favorite culture traitor. After all, in an already long (some would say too long) career, Styron has managed to sell books by betraying first his people (the South) in *The Confessions of Nat Turner,* and then his adopted people (Jewish intellectuals in New York) in *Sophie's Choice.* Who knows what he might have in store for the French? On the other hand, maybe Jack Lang is simply indulging his well-advertised anti-Americanism. Out of sheer spite, French critics have always pretended to adore Jerry Lewis as the highest expression of American civilization. After all, Styron has done at least as much for the novel as Jerry did for film. □

Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall

One sure sign of a decadent aristocracy is its isolation. The peasants may be storming castle walls while the quality is sipping tea in the garden. The journalism establishment is a case in point. Every year they hand out the National Magazine Awards to deserving publications. Scanning the list of recipients for the last 15 years, however, suggests that these prizes might more appropriately be relabeled *The National* Magazine Awards. Leftist journals such as *The Nation* and *Mother Jones* share the spoils with *The New Republic, Time, The New Yorker,* and *National Lampoon.* Nowhere in the list of award recipients —nowhere even in the list of finalists— are found *National Review, Commentary, The American Spectator,* or any other serious conservative magazine. They are apparently not part of "the nation" being surveyed for merit. Nor is ideological bias the only objectionable characteristic of the awards. Comparing the list of award winners with the list of employers of the judges and the screening committee reveals a curious repetition. The inclusion in the process of a few journalism professors from Columbia, New York University, and a few other schools merely underscores the truth: the only "nation" represented by these awards is the mutual admiration society of New York editors, writers, and "perfessors." □

Spanish Ayes

It has been some time since Spain has been known for political journalism. One sign of promise, however, is *Nuestro Tiempo,* a monthly magazine published in Madrid. It is not so much a news magazine as a topical presentation of significant events and ideas, from the perspective of the Spanish right: the church and morality, business and private enterprise, education, and law and order.

Rather than a call for action, *Nuestro Tiempo* is a forum for discussion. A recent issue featured an essay against the autonomy of the sciences, which argued for a dialogue between humanists and experimenters. This same issue included coverage of an international conference of university students, a study of journalistic ethics, and an intelligent discussion of the growing invasion of the public sector in economic activity. *Nuestro Tiempo* is a responsible and moderate organ of the Christian right in Spain which deserves serious international attention. (CC) □

In the Mail

The Dynamic Character of Christian Culture: Essays on Dawsonian Themes **edited by Peter J. Cataldo; University Press of America/Society for Christian Culture; Washington, DC.** Essays on, around, and about Christopher Dawson, "the premier Catholic thinker on the subject of Christian culture."

In Recognition of William Gaddis **edited by John Kuehl and Steven Moore; Syracuse University Press; Syracuse, NY.** Gaddis, like a Salinger or a Pynchon, is often more provocative by his absence (literary or otherwise) than by his presence.

Free Enterprise: 15 Commentaries **edited by Bert Elwert; University of Illinois at Chicago.** Terse, lively comments by people including Leopold Tyrmand dispel some of the dismal quality of the dread science.

Political Terrorism: A Research Guide to Concepts, Theories, Data Bases, and Literature **edited by Alex P. Schmidt; Transaction Books; New Brunswick, NJ.** A tremendously comprehensive book (nearly 600 pages) about a subject that any who have anything to lose—from property to liberty, life to limbs—should be forewarned against.

NEA: Propaganda Front of the Radical Left **by Sally D. Reed; National Council for Better Education; Washington, D.C.** "Schools govern the world," said Martin Luther. If so, the shamelessly leftist tilt of the nation's largest teachers' union should be a cause for serious concern.

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JOURNALISM

A Plague on Both Your Houses

Women have always been our censors. Mrs. Grundy was a household word for inflexible propriety a good 30 years before Dr. Bowdler produced his expurgated version of Shakespeare. Times and manners change, and the American Mrs. Grundys took up, in succession, Abolition, Women's Suffrage, and Temperance, but it remained true that:

> Many are afraid of God
> and more of Mrs. Grundy.

Her most recent and unlikely incarnation is as a radical feminist. She's given up suffrage for androgyny, but she still holds on to her inflexible determination to impose morality. In what has been described as "porn wars," the feminists are lined up with the Moral Majority to attack pornography, which they define as any depiction of women as the victims of violence or lust. The biggest *cause* so far has been the Minneapolis ordinance devised by law professor Carol MacKinnon and the feminist answer to John Candy, Andrea Dworkin—the high priestess of hermaphrodites. In the final event, the mayor of Minneapolis vetoed the law, which would have made it possible for women to sue pornographers for "psychological damage," but a similar ordinance has passed in Indianapolis.

The press has not been slow to take up an issue that allows them to talk dirty. Most news stories are limited to reporting on the curious alignment of Jerry Falwell and Gloria Steinem. Walter Goodman, writing last July in the *New York Times,* refrained from explicit editorializing, but he did manage to make his preference plain. He cites, without remark, the declaration of the 1970 Presidential Commission that pornography has no effect on criminal

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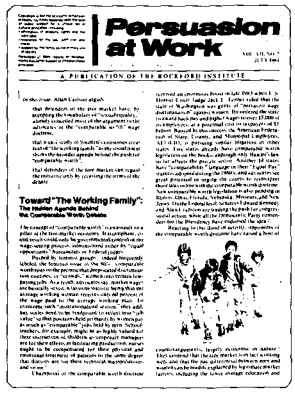
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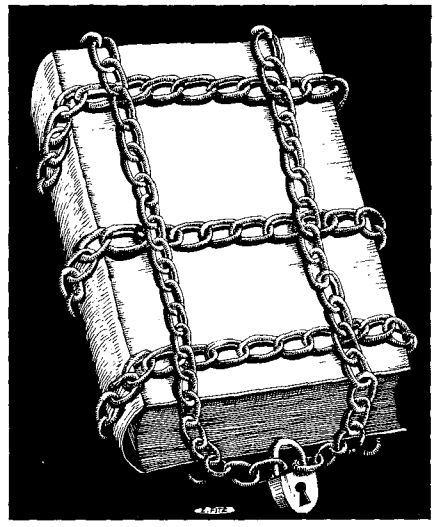
behavior and concludes with an ACLU statement calling for "the broadest interpretation" of the First Amendment. By taking the line that pornography is a legal issue—one that falls between the poles of criminal influence and civil rights—the *Times* removes the subject from the moral sphere. In September the *Los Angeles Times* printed a racier story by Patrick Goldstein, who interviewed three women record company executives. The ladies expressed concern over s/m (sado-masochist) images in rock videos, which tend to portray women as a "conglomeration of fishnet stockings, breasts, and spiked heels." But—and this is typical of the *Los Angeles Times*—the story is more concerned with the industry's dilemma (how can they pass up the revenues?) than with the moral implications. Elektra executives are quoted as insisting that "video reflects cultural values as much as it shapes them." The same could be said for Jack the Ripper. The language of ethics is as alien to Los Angeles as it is to New York. It is hardly surprising, since most gentlemen of the press are, well, gentlemen of the press, whether they are grinning down at you from the TV screen or splitting infinitives on the editorial page. For most of them, their ethical education stopped in ninth grade Health & Guidance class.

If the press can only view pornography as a legal, rather than a moral issue, then they cannot escape seeing it as a question of balance: the rights of writers, publishers, and shopkeepers vs. the rights of women. Jean Bethke Elshtain, in a serious *New Republic* article (25 June



1984), expresses her unhappiness with the "porn plague" and finds the conservative alternative offered by George Will "attractive," but she is frightened by its implications. Will had pointed out that community health depends on maintaining and enforcing a collective moral sense, but—she suggests—

> He apparently forgot that his ideal traditional communities restricted many women and denied them full civil identity.... He also added a heavy dose of conventional moralism on sexual behavior in general, as if *any* deviation from the standard 'Thou shalt nots' puts us on a slippery slope to sleaze and sadism. Will's 'high' standards may, in practice, function rather like the old double standard. For what counted as 'deviant' in traditional communities was all too frequently a woman's desire to break out of an oppressive double standard of sexual morality.

Elshtain is a feminist trying to climb back up the precipitous slope of social liberalism. The bottom of the slide is represented by writers like Carolyn Weaver in *Mother Jones* (December 1984). She complains that the "new feminist orthodoxy" on sex leaves out "a large number of women, lesbian and straight, who balked at deferring their pleasures...." Women should be less concerned with preserving their special status. Taking her title from Tina Turner's celebration of the hooker, "What's Love Got to Do With It?" Weaver concludes:

> Perhaps what we need now is less theory and more such models who... can show us how to 'get it, bring it, and put it right here.'

Elshtain, on the other hand, is intelligent enough to realize that communities "should have the power to regulate and to curb open and visible assaults on human dignity." (Was she thinking of Tina Turner?) But she has only begun to think through the problem. We cannot, she argues, return to an America of shared values and community consensus. Instead, we need to aim at a society in which pornography will no longer "speak to our isolation, our resentment, our fear."

In her conclusion, Elshtain seems to accept the feminist theory (borrowed from Michael Foucault) that the objects of pornography are the powerless victims of society—typically, women

LIBERAL CULTURE

All in the Family

An organization calling itself the Family Service America recently issued a report forecasting significant social and semantic changes in the country's near future. Predicted the report:

> Stemming from the weakening of religious, social and legal taboos, greater sexual freedom will promote continued growth of cohabitation, single-person households, unwed single-parent families and homosexual couples....
>
> Despite the moral objections of traditionalists, there will be widespread recognition of a family as consisting of two or more people joined by bonds of sharing and intimacy.

How did the Family Service America come to the conclusion that "traditionalists" object to bonds of sharing and intimacy in their family lives? And who will announce that "bonds" established in singles' bars and "intimacies" exchanged in homosexual bathhouses form "families"? □

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and children. Peter Drucker in *Against the Current* (Fall 1984) makes the connection clear:

> The chief merit of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* comes from his adopting, ably defending and seeing the full consequences of the radical position that, whatever the biological basis of human sexual drives, there is nothing innate or 'natural' in the way these drives are channeled or structured. Feminists have always insisted that there is nothing 'natural' about the social roles our culture assigns to males and females. The early movement for gay liberation added that neither heterosexuality nor homosexuality are innately determined forms of sexual behavior; both are socially shaped and defined by the institutions and ideology of our particular culture.

But Drucker dissents from the feminist interpretation. After all, "domination often does appear unmistakably in any kind of sexuality." Even though s/m pornography does reflect "systematic power imbalances," the state should not be intervening selectively in our erotic lives. Drucker also insists that we should have a comprehensive social vision which will magically eliminate the appeal of filth:

> The solution to sexist pornography is not to ban it, but to offer non-sexist, erotic alternatives. . . . We can only take small steps in this direction before fundamental changes occur in this society. . . . The aim of a socialist and feminist transformation of society is to enlarge as much as possible the 'realm of freedom' . . . . With such a transformation the whole notion of 'normal sexuality' . . . would disappear. . . .

Drucker is right about one thing—and only one thing: the argument over censorship does turn on the nature of men and women. Like Drucker, most feminists put the blame on capitalist society or "patriarchalism." Ginny Soley, for example, writes in *Sojourner* (an ostensibly Protestant journal) that our male-biased American culture fosters violence against women:

> The structures of patriarchy are inherently unbalanced. And while the imbalance is maintained, the threat of force is always present. But an alternative to viewing our relationships as struggles for power exists . . . etc., etc.

What none of these writers—Elshtain, Drucker, or the "Sojourners"—are willing to confront is the accumulating evidence on sex differences in the human (and other) species, or the *universal,* repeat: *universal* occurrence of sex roles and male dominance. If patriarchalism is to blame, then why are so many more outrages against women committed now than in the Victorian era? Why more in American Black communities, which are aptly described as matriarchal, than among more patriarchal whites (Black males per capita commit about nine times as many rapes as whites)? When it comes down to it, why don't women rape men? It is not a question of size—gang rape is a popular diversion in some neighborhoods. Sexual equality would, in fact, depend on the sort of total renovation of society demanded by Drucker and Elshtain. Their escape from history into fantasy is a clear sign of a basic intellectual defect: they cannot connect up the consequences of actions —never mind ideas. If 100 years of progressive equality and sexual freedom leads to where we are today, it may be time to retrace our steps. But no, the journalist's eyes look in only one direction, the someday-soon perfection of the future. Unfortunately, the only guidebooks to this land of heart's desire have been written by Plato and Sir Thomas More. □

Book-Burning and Worse

Journalists and cartoonists usually depict censors as illiterate rubes. Many of them are. But they are intellectual enough to take ideas seriously. Though there have been many shameful—and silly—book-burnings in this century, no one can accuse book-burners of underestimating the potential power of the written word. No less than the careful editor of a professional journal (himself a kind of censor) who rejects most manuscripts as unfit for publication, the parent who wants some books out of the tax-supported library is intent on putting boundaries around certain kinds of thinking.

Those who cheerfully dismiss all censorship in favor of "the free play of ideas" either believe that ideas are mental toys, which have no influence on behavior, or they simply do not care if their teenage son uses a how-to manual on suicide or if the neighbor boy reenacts an erotic novel with their daughter. Last summer a *New York Times* editorial urged a never-ending "struggle" against all those who believe "putting ideas in

other people's heads is still a crime." We wonder if, in retrospect, the *Times* would have refused to keep copies of *Mein Kampf* out of the hands of all the boys who grew up into SS men.

The *Times* affects aloofness from material concerns, but their sweeping dismissal of censorship puts them in the same camp with the greediest of entrepreneurs. According to the *Wall Street Journal* Madison Avenue is no longer worried about violating taboos, now that their survey research has revealed that most viewers do not hold advertisers

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responsible for programming content. Hollywood has reached the same conclusion. According to a recent *Los Angeles Times* feature, the sheer profitability of gore films has induced Hollywood to ignore "the fierce debate . . . on the matter of the effect on the viewers" and to proceed with "blood sport." Responding to adverse criticism of graphic depictions of brutality and victimization of women, one money-making director said: "These films are only reflections of horror—they aren't real. They are latex and Karo syrup."

To its credit, the *LA Times* has expressed some skepticism over television's new willingness to explore child pornography, wife-beating, incest, homosexuality, and other controversial topics. In assessing CBS's much-lauded "Fallen Angel," a program dealing with child pornography, *LA Times* observed that "what it generated" in the subsequent season was "less high-minded." They also questioned the apparent discrepancy between ABC's professed standard of never glorifying prostitution and the portrayal in "My Mother's Secret Life" of "a healthy, attractive, well-paid hooker who salvages a relationship with her daughter."

With the *Wall Street Journal,* the reader finds a disturbing schizophrenia dividing the thoughtfulness of the editorial page and the bottom-line treatment which their reporters have accorded to media, movies, and publishing. Constant exposure to hookers and hatchet murderers may have more than merely moral consequences. In the long run it could undermine the morale of employees. It might even affect profits. □

The Ingersoll Prizes 1984

"In the long reach of history, it is the cultural institutions which mark the city of enlightenment, not its generals nor its statesmen nor its entrepreneurs." So declared Dr. John A. Howard, president of The Ingersoll Foundation and of The Rockford Institute, as he welcomed leading scholars, critics, business executives, and patrons of the arts to the second annual Ingersoll Prizes Awards Banquet. Held on November 16th, 1984, in Chicago's Ritz-Carlton hotel, the banquet honored Anthony Dymoke Powell as the recipient of the T. S. Eliot Award for Creative Writing and Russell Amos Kirk as the recipient of the Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters.

Pastor Richard John Neuhaus, author, theologian, and director of The Rockford Institute's Center on Religion & Society in New York, opened the evening with an invocation in which he prayed that The Ingersoll Prizes might be established as "a sign and an encouragement—of a conservatism that contends for all that is of abiding worth; of a liberalism that bespeaks generosity of spirit and hopefulness of purpose; of a radicalism that refuses to settle for anything less than truth."

Following Pastor Neuhaus's prayer, Dr. Howard formally greeted those in attendance and outlined the nature of the prizes to be awarded. "The abiding impact of the prizes," he said, "is, and will continue to be, shaped by the individuals chosen to receive them and by the long influence of their works upon human perceptions, human judgments, and human behavior. That this is so sets these prizes wholly apart from other widely known awards in literature and the humanities." Further explaining the distinctive nature of The Ingersoll Prizes, Dr. Howard observed that "the notion that true art cannot be an instrument of degradation, that art of eternal value is elevating art, has largely passed from cultural intercourse in America and many other Western nations . . . . It is a notion we seek to revive in the perceptions of literate individuals and above all in the calculus of literary and scholarly criticism."

Prefacing the presentation of the awards, Mr. Leopold Tyrmand, vice president of The Rockford Institute and executive secretary of The Ingersoll Prizes, delineated the reasons for the selection of the honorees:

"It is clear from the impact of his works on his contemporaries that Dr. Kirk has been accorded one of those rare appointments with history which men of thought dream about but are not always granted. Impenetrable are the ways by which a particular mind influences the affairs of a civilized society. Dr. Kirk begins *The Conservative Mind,* his major work, with a quotation from Coleridge in which he observes that a philosophy survives in the form of its own 'refractions,' and that *only* through them can it touch minds, shape existences, influence societies. In other words, philosophies that affect human lives engender cultural fashions which, in turn, determine their value in the stock exchange of ideas, and regulate their marketability. Thus, the cultural fashions which a philosophy begets become its destiny. Coleridge's observation is as profound as it is distressing. It somehow leads us to think that liberalism, as we know it nowadays, must be judged not by those noble, 19th-century battles it fought for the meaning of Western civilization, but by its subsequent fashionableness among 20th-century idea producers. Therefore, cultural fashions are not only the consequences of a popular philosophy, they are also its verdict. And this is where both Dr. Kirk and Anthony Powell bring light to us: one by diagnosing the ulcers of vulgarity, cynicism, despair, and viciousness

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Comment

(continued from page 5)

of violent pornography into an already unstable world. Recent psychological studies suggest that some people *are* profoundly stimulated by exposure to sadistic films and literature. In such a case, prudence dictates that we ignore the assumed rights of privacy and do our best to eliminate the sources of contagion.

One final point. Americans seem unwilling to exercise the legitimate powers of the censor through their institutions. The fact that even conservatives (with the exception of George Will) fall back on the language of rights indicates a failure of nerve at the very center of our common life. Who are we, as Americans, and what do we live for, if we cannot put a stop to the prostitution of children and the exploitation of women who could be our sisters and daughters? In 1873 James Fitzjames Stephens made what he thought was an effective *reductio ad absurdum* of John Stuart Mill's defense of natural liberty: if a group of men were to form an association to distribute literature which undermined the morality of women, we would not be inclined to listen to their pleas for freedom of speech. Stephens took it for granted that we would know how to deal with them. It's taken only a century, but the hell of it is that we no longer know.

—Thomas J. Fleming

that dominate our awareness of our age, the other by chronicling them.

"In contrast to last year's selection of two towering intellects essentially remote from one another—this year we have two who, each in his own genre, moves toward the same objective, or pursues analogous inquiries. They both try to excavate some fundamental principle of order from the chaos of existence. Mr. Powell's vast accomplishment is to illuminate the British variety of human being as a social species, without the bewildering embellishments of philosophy and history. His is the great task of turning style into substance, refracting life's nature through its reflections in life's passing detail, transforming into massive statements what his counterparts among 18th-century masters of English literature expressed in delicate sketches. Dr. Kirk's life and *oeuvre* affirm that the defense of the moral complexities of a *Weltanschauung* is fundamentally independent from self-interest, or from the so-called class-consciousness—a grotesquely sinister notion that has so harmfully simplified the timeless, unending Judeo-Christian quest for the better man, the better society, the better world.

"Which leads me to a necessary reminder: If in communism that which is rewarded and celebrated is restricted to ideological servility, in our post-industrial democracy public acclaim in the realm of culture has been so thoroughly divorced from actual merit that it has become an independent industry. A revered status for today's creative and scholarly minds is now contingent upon their idolatry of virtuous egalitarianism and sentimental relativism. With few exceptions, only those expressions which are imbued with the liberal odor of sanctity stand a chance of being warmly extolled by the media, and are easily converted into financial triumph. The elaborate promotions that saturate the fabric of our social and cultural reality turn the celebrated into a celebrity. The delicate device of public recognition thus performs as a barometer of cultural climates and moods, attuned not to the measurement of excellence or enduring cultural worth, but to the caprices of ideological meteorology. The spiritual pettiness that pervades contemporary democratic societies too often results in applauding mere modishness, hailing it as creativity of mind and soul, entrenching a rigid intellectual and artistic conformity.

"Through The Ingersoll Prizes we are committed to higher goals than the celebration of clever expediency or the measurement of sociopolitical temperatures. We believe that the Judeo-Christian civilization which evolved the concepts of monotheism, justice, verifiable truth, mercy, human and civil rights, equality before law, and pluralistic democracy—this civilization is a precious value that deserves constant reaffirmation and loyalty. What we wish to encourage, elevate, advance, is a style of cultural impulse, a style of social sensibility, a style of political thinking that safeguards the successful transmission of the most valuable imponderables from one historical formation to the next. In such striving, both Mr. Powell and Dr. Kirk are precious exemplars. And this is what motivates us to seek out the Kirks and the Powells of our historical moment and honor them."

Accepting the Eliot Award on behalf of Mr. Powell (who was unable to attend) was Robert Conquest, distinguished poet and scholar of Russian history. Mr. Conquest read an address written for the occasion by Mr. Powell discussing the relationship between the "real person" and fictional characters. In accepting the Weaver Award, Dr. Kirk focused his remarks on the moral influence of literature. Mr. Powell's acceptance address appears in the January 1985 issue of *Chronicles of Culture*; Dr. Kirk's appears in this issue. □

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